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English Travel Books about the Arab near East in the Eighteenth Century

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# ENGLISH TRAVEL BOOKS ABOUT THE ARAB NEAR EAST IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

BY

MOHAMAD ALI HACHICHO

Köln

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of registered history, the Mediterranean World has been the soil where the seeds of civilization have flourished, and its eastern shores the home of religions that have changed the history of man. What we call the Near East to-day has always been the scene of momentous events and the field of ever abundant, ever changing creative civilizations. From it Europe has received a rich heritage which it has developed to a very high standard, whereas the Near East, in its present state, has retained only the character of a bridge between East and West, but also pregnant with political and social changes leading its own way and revealing its own personality.

With a few exceptions, the East Mediterranean was the attraction of ancient travellers, who, while cruising its shores, or penetrating into its interior, resembled joyous children playing in a well-kept garden round the shores of a lake.<sup>1</sup> Apart from visiting Greek and Roman sites, it was for every rich and ambitious traveller a great feat of accomplishment to visit Egypt, and learn more about its colossal monuments and the mysterious Nile with its annual miracle of the Summer floods. By the fall of the Roman World, the sweeping swarms of invaders from the North and East, threatening Christian Europe, the domination of the feudal system, and the spreading tide of Islam in North Africa and the East Mediterranean, a new era in the history of Near East travel started. Though feudalism created many handicaps in the way of free travelling, Christianity helped to expand it. The strength of religious motives that led the pious travellers to visit the shrines and relics scattered in the Near

<sup>1</sup> See J. N. Baker, *A History of Geographical Discovery and Exploration*, London, 1948, pp. 17-33; H. J. Wood, *Exploration and Discovery*, London, 1951, pp. 15-27; Richard S. Lambert, *The Fortunate Traveller*, London, 1950, ch. 1.

East and the countries associated with the history of the Gospels, dominated Medieval travel in general. While the pagan traveller was a curious sight-seer, the medieval one was a pilgrim.<sup>1</sup> The earliest European reports about the Near East under Islamic supremacy are to be found therefore in journals of European pilgrims to Palestine. It was the good relations between Charlemagne and Hārūn ar-Rašīd that encouraged the stream of pilgrims in the ninth century, after the Caliph had granted him the guardianship of the Holy Places in Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> But two centuries later, conditions of travel to the Holy Land deteriorated faster than ever. In 1076 the Seljuk Turks seized Palestine, and began to put every kind of difficulty in the way of Christian visitors, which attitude is considered as the chief reason for the launching of the Crusades.<sup>3</sup>

I have tried so far to give a few introductory touches to show the earliest contacts between Europe and the Near East until the fall of Acre in 1291. But the subject of this dissertation deals with *English* travellers to the Arab Near East, and in a particular period—the *eighteenth century*. The role which the Near East played in English commercial and political history is too great to be overlooked. In this respect it “constitutes one of the most significant chapters in the overseas history of Great Britain.”<sup>4</sup> The establishment of the Levant Company in 1581, when the pilgrim traffic had almost ceased, marks the beginnings of more substantial contact.<sup>5</sup> The Levant Company and its later institutions at Tripoli in 1583, and Aleppo in 1613, had a threefold aim. It represented first, a political manoeuvre to enlist the sympathies of the Ottoman Empire against Spain and France. On the other hand, the English factory at Aleppo was an all-important link joining Latakia and Alexandretta on the Mediterranean with Basra on the Persian Gulf, for the convenience of English trade trafficking along the

<sup>1</sup> Lambert, *op. cit.*, ch. II.

<sup>2</sup> See Gerd Tellenbach, *Europa im Zeitalter der Karolinger*, in *Historia Mundi*, Bern, 1956, vol. V, p. 424; also Roger de Tournau, *Der Islam im Westen*, *ibid.*, vol. VI, p. 515; also Veit Valentin, *Weltgeschichte bis zu den Religionskriegen*, Köln, 1950, p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> Veit Valentin, *op. cit.*, p. 261; also Herbert M. J. Loewe, *The Seljuqs*, in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. IV, p. 316.

<sup>4</sup> Brown, W. C., *The Popularity of English Travel Books about the N. E., 1775-1825* in *Philological Quarterly*, 15, 1936, p. 70.

<sup>5</sup> Abdul Karim M. Gharaybeh, *English Traders in Syria, 1744-1799*, Ph. D. Thesis, University of London, 1950, pp. 5-6 also Robin Fedden, *English Travellers in the Near East*, London, 1958, p. 70.

Desert route to India.<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, the Company's counters and consulates in Syria, over a long period of time, offered travellers a shelter, and somewhere to stay, when public inns were not common in a country unknown to them and in many cases hostile. These were vital staging posts which made it possible for Englishmen to visit the Near East with a certain security, and in ever-greater numbers from the last decades of the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> However, in comparison to the throngs of Englishmen touring the Near East during the 18th and early 19th centuries, the number of English travellers who went there immediately after the establishment of the Levant Company seems small and the quality of their reports less inviting.<sup>3</sup> These were mostly traders who were intent on material profit, and were in most cases obliged to use the Desert route to India during the European wars when the sea routes were not safe. War years meant depression periods for the English traders in Syria, and these travellers, therefore, had no time or interest to penetrate into the country and give a more satisfying description of its state and conditions. Yet, their accounts of the route in question and the organization of the caravans are very informative.<sup>4</sup>

It was, however, not until the middle of the eighteenth century that the Near East became known to the English traveller on a general scale. The Englishman was keen in the first place on keeping contact with continental Europe. Cut off in his island home, he felt a great need to keep in touch with civilized Europe. As Richard Lambert puts it 'everything—news, luxuries, epidemics, waves of invaders and inventions—reached him last across the narrow strip of water that separated him from the mainland. Consequently the enterprising Englishman had to bestir himself and cross the sea in order to keep abreast of the times.'<sup>5</sup> Thus Renaissance Italy, with its wealth of culture and antiquities became the sole attraction of most English scholars and gentlemen. In Seeley's own words, 'France and England had no doubt advanced greatly, but to the Italian in the 15th century they still seemed

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<sup>1</sup> Carruthers, Douglas, *The Desert Route to India*—Hakluyt 2nd series No. LXIII, vol. 63 London, 1929, introduction.

<sup>2</sup> Fedden, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Brown, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Gharaybeh, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> Lambert, op. cit., pp. 37-8.

comparatively barbarous, intellectually provincial and second-rate.<sup>1</sup> Under Queen Elizabeth foreign travel was regarded as the summit of a liberal education.<sup>2</sup> By the end of her reign, the Englishman, quite satiated with Italian culture and learning, turned now to France—a new centre of glittering light. The English seeker of learning began as ‘gentleman’ to feel the necessity for courtly accomplishments; and France afforded that with abundance. Later on, several other European countries attracted Englishmen, and the Grand Tour became a fashion reaching its maturity in the eighteenth century, as soon as the wars of Marlborough were over and the Hanoverians well settled on the English throne.<sup>3</sup>

By the middle of the century, the English traveller began to acquire a taste for mountain scenery, and a little later a taste for mountain climbing. There arose a strong predilection for the romantic and terrible in nature, and accordingly, Switzerland and the Alps became integral parts of the Grand Tour. This new passion for the picturesque was reflected in a stream of travel-literature that concentrated on natural scenery. As M. R. Rushky points out, ‘an important ingredient in the general ferment of the pre-Romantic period, satisfying a craving for remoteness both in space and in time, the travel-book was, later, to receive impetus from the spread of “romantic” ideals. Men travelled in search of these ideals, for love of the marvellous and the mysterious, to observe the noble savage, or meditate upon the ruins of empire. In fact, throughout the period, the relation between travel-literature and the Romantic Movement was one of action and reaction.’<sup>4</sup> But no sooner had the English traveller tasted the joys of nature in the wild, than the French Revolution, and later the Napoleonic wars broke out, to interrupt European travel and close Western Europe to sight-seers.<sup>5</sup> In the meanwhile, a growing interest in scientific archaeology

<sup>1</sup> J. R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, London, 1921, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Bacon, *Essay on Travel*, “Of Travaile”

<sup>3</sup> Lambert, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> M. R. Rushdy, *English Travellers in Egypt during the Reign of Mohamad Ali* (1805-1847), Ph. D., Univ. of Leeds, 1950, pp. 4-5. For the bearings of James Bruce's African travels on Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, see John Livingston Lowes, *The Road to Xanadou*, N.Y., 1930, pp. 370-79. Relations between Keats' *Endymion* and travellers' accounts of the monuments of Egypt are discussed in H. Darbishire's *Keats and Egypt* in *Review of English Studies*, III, No. 9, Jan. 1927, pp. 1-11.

<sup>5</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 72; *Quarterly Review* XI, (1814), p. 458.

was beginning to show itself by the middle of the eighteenth century, which caused many Englishmen on the Grand Tour to extend their itinerary to Greece, Asia Minor, and Egypt.<sup>1</sup> The result was that a rich stream of English travellers began from this time to flow towards the East, fulfilling John Locke's call in his controversy with Shaftesbury on the subject of travel in 1700, that foreign travel should not be limited to the Grand Tour, but extended bravely to Africa, Asia and America.<sup>2</sup> Another cause that turned the attention of Englishmen to the Near East was the focusing of English colonial interests on India.<sup>3</sup> For British supremacy in India and England's empire struggles with France and Russia gave the Near East great importance as strategic territory through which lay all overland routes to India.<sup>4</sup> As Zaki Saleh puts it, 'predominance in this section of the world was to become not merely relevant or desirable, but of absolute necessity for the maintenance of British interests and prestige in the East. This epoch-making change of attitude came as a result of the emergence of a new and dangerous rival, Napoleon Bonaparte. His invasion of Egypt and subsequent designs of taking India made the British government think more seriously and act more effectively. And it was during the Napoleonic era that British influence in the Middle East as a whole was first firmly established.'<sup>5</sup>

All these reasons helped to attract English travellers in increasing numbers and direct their attention to the Near East. By the end of the century, the newly enriched middle classes—products of the Industrial Revolution—who earlier would never have dreamt of crossing the channel, began touring abroad, many of them with their entire families.<sup>6</sup> This direct contact with the Near East which began about the middle of the eighteenth century and reached its

<sup>1</sup> Lionel Cust and Sidney Colvin, *History of the Society of Dilettanti*, London, 1898.

<sup>2</sup> Lambert, pp. 60-61; Richard Hurd, *On the Uses of Foreign Travel*, 1764.

<sup>3</sup> For Napoleon's interests in Egypt as a basis to attack India, see J. R. Seeley, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40. For the differences between Britain on the one hand, and France and Russia on the other hand to conquer India in the 18th cent., see pp. 216-17 and 246-47. As to the English interests in the Persian Gulf in the 18th cent., see A. T. Wilson's *The Persian Gulf*, Oxford, 1928, ch. XII, pp. 171 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Seeley, on page 222, states, 'Owing to [the possession of India] we have a leading position in the system of Asiatic powers, and a leading interest in the affairs of all those countries which lie upon the route to India.'

<sup>5</sup> Zaki Saleh, *Mesopotamia (Iraq)—(1600-1914)*, Bagdad, 1950, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> Brown, p. 71; William Macmichael, *The Gold-Headed Cane*, London, 1828, pp. 157-8.



climax by the middle of the nineteenth century, resulted in a great body of Near East travel-literature which enjoyed a long period of popularity. Brown's paper on this subject is well known, very precise and illuminating.<sup>1</sup> He gives many evidences for the popularity of Near East travel books between 1775 and 1825 from whole issues of contemporary periodicals, reviews, and other documents. In this connection the reader is also referred to the introduction of M. R. Rushdy's elaborate dissertation which throws light on the major causes for the popularity of travel and travel-literature during the period in question.<sup>2</sup> One significant result of this huge body of Near East travel-literature from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards was to bring the Orient much nearer to England than ever before.<sup>3</sup> It exercised such a considerable influence on the literature and social life in England that many works have been devoted to the study of the different aspects of this influence.<sup>4</sup> In Brown's own words, 'the great vogue for the writing and reading of Near East Travel books between 1775 and 1825 naturally had a marked influence on contemporary thought and activity. This influence appears clearly in English social life and the arts, of which, for example, the popularity of Greek and Turkish fashion in dress and household decoration is an unmistakable indication. In the literature of the period the vogue of Near East travel books exerted an even stronger influence. First, by providing the necessary knowledge of the Near East, these travel books helped

<sup>1</sup> W. C. Brown, *The Popularity of English Travel Books about the Near East, 1775-1825*, *Philological Quarterly*, 15, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> M. R. Rushdy, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-10.

<sup>3</sup> Martha P. Conant, *The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century*, N.Y., 1908, pp. 1-72 and 255-6.

<sup>4</sup> W. G. Rice, *Turk, Moor, and Persian in English Literature from 1550-1660*, Harvard doctoral dissertation, 1926; M. P. Conant, *op. cit.*; Edna Osborne, *Oriental Diction and Theme in English Verse, 1740-1840*, University of Kansas Humanistic Studies (1916-21) II, pp. 1-142; J. B. Botsford, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century as Influenced from Overseas*, New York, 1924; A. S. Tuberville, *English Men and Manners in the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, 1926; A. E. Richardson, *Georgian England*, London 1931; W. C. Brown's following articles: *Byron and English Interest in the Near East*, *Studies in Philology*, XXXIV (1937) pp. 55-64; *Thomas Moore and English Interest in the Near East*, *Studies in Philology*, XXXIV (1937), pp. 575-588; *Robert Southey and English Interest in the Near East*, *Journal of English Literary History*, V. (1938), pp. 218-224; *Prose Fiction and English Interest in the Near East, 1775-1825*, *PMLA*, LIII (1938), pp. 827-837; *The Near East in English Drama, 1775-1825*, *The Journal of English and German Philology*, XLVI, (1947), pp. 63-9; Marie de Meester, *Oriental Influences in the Literature of the Nineteenth Century*, Heidelberg, 1915; Fatima Mahmud, *The Oriental Tale in the Nineteenth Century*, doctoral dissertation, University of London, 1957.

to create at home a large body of poetry and prose of which this region is the theme or background. Second, the interest in the travel-book material explains why certain ideas recur among the minor poets about the Near East. And finally, the contemporary reader's familiarity with the Near East, through the travel books, partly accounts for the instantaneous popularity of such works as Byron's *Childe Harold* (Canto II), his *Turkish verse tales*, Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, Thomas Hope's *Anastatius*, and James Morier's *Hajji Baba*. Because of the wide popularity and general influence of this group of travel books, a study of their contents and of their relationship to the other writings of the time will necessarily be of some significance in the literary history of the age of romanticism.<sup>1</sup> This call for the necessity of an adequate study of travel-literature in general had been raised four years before Brown by R. W. Frantz, who was surprised at the nonexistence of any comprehensive examination of English travel literature for any period.<sup>2</sup>

Though the direct personal contact between English travellers and the Near East took place first in the 19th century, and resulted in a flow of individual and original accounts about it, travellers of the eighteenth century were the pioneers who paved the way before Kinglake and his successors. It is to be admitted that the eighteenth century travel books about the Near East rarely possess lasting merit, and are scarcely read to-day, but they indicated the main landmarks, and, according to Fedden, 'it remained on the one hand for the specialist—Egyptologist, Arabist, sociologist, biblical scholar—to fill in the detail, and on the other for the creative writer to evolve a new approach to the Near East as a literary theme.'<sup>3</sup> As Egypt was the country visited most by English travellers in the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries, the body of their travel-accounts was thoroughly studied by two Egyptian Arabs, M. R. Rushdy and M. Anis, both in 1950.<sup>4</sup> Rushdy studied the travel-book about Egypt in the reign of Mohamad Ali, as a piece of literary history, with an attempt to

<sup>1</sup> Brown, *The Popularity . . . etc.*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Frantz, *The English Traveller and the Movement of Ideas, 1660-1732*, Univ. Stud. of the U. of Nebraska, vols XXXII-XXXIII, 1932-1933 pp. 13-14.

<sup>3</sup> Fedden, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> M. R. Rushdy, *op. cit.*; M. Anis, *Some Aspects of British Interest in Egypt in the late Eighteenth Century*, doctoral thesis, University of Birmingham, 1950.

show the development of a form of literary expression. Anis approached the subject to throw light on British interest in Egypt during the period. Both studies are of considerable value for the study of Egyptian travel in a period in which the travel-book in general flourished and developed best.<sup>1</sup>

But still, English travellers to the Arab Near East in the eighteenth century, though less in number and different in their outlook and approach, have to be studied as a prelude to an age when the Near East became well known to almost every English reader. In this paper, I have attempted, therefore, to study the subject matter of English travel accounts on the Arab Near East, during the century which preceded the establishment of English influence in this part of the world. I have divided the work into three main parts. The first has been devoted to the study of earlier travellers right to the beginning of the 18th century, as a link to the host of travellers under examination. The second part deals with the 18th century travellers proper, classified in six different categories, where their biographies, accounts, and motives of travel are examined. In each group, the travellers are arranged chronologically according to the years of their entry to the toured countries. The third part discusses the background and common characteristics of the travel-accounts. My work does not claim to have dealt with this subject from all its possible aspects, but I shall be satisfied if my small contribution adds something new to the scholarly studies of the subject we already have at hand.

I have much pleasure in acknowledging my indebtedness to Professor Dr. Dr. Otto SPIES, without whose incessant aid and encouragement this thesis would not have been possible. The author wishes to acknowledge also the kindness of Professors Dr. Dr. Annemarie Schimmel, Dr. Wolfgang Schmidt-Hidding and Dr. Arno Esch for their aid rendered in reading the paper and offering valuable criticisms. My thanks are due also to Mr. Frank Shaw for his careful reading and corrections of the typescript.

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<sup>1</sup> As regards the important travel-books of the 16th century see: Max Böhme, *Die grossen Reisesammlungen des 16. Jahrhunderts und ihre Bedeutung*, Phil. Diss. Leipzig, Strassburg 1904.

PART ONE

**EARLY TRAVELLERS BEFORE THE EIGHTEENTH  
CENTURY**

**(A PRELIMINARY SURVEY)**

A. DEVOTED PILGRIMS TO THE HOLY LAND

European travel movement, whether on the Continent, or around the Mediterranean, was seriously retarded by the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of the medieval feudal system.<sup>1</sup> Roman roads fell into decay, and new barbarous invasions brought about insecurity and danger. The subsequent feudal system only allowed freedom of movement to the landed nobility. Christianity, however, by promising the believers a better spiritual life after death, gave them hopes and motives to visit the visible signs, relics and symbols of that other world. Thus it was an encouraging element to travel, and helped to expand it in spite of the rigid feudal system. As soon as the Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena achieved their plan of consecrating all Near Eastern sites associated with Gospel history, and of identifying them with Churches and sacred memorials, a flow of pilgrims began to invade the Near East from all parts of Europe, so that no place famous in either the Old or the New Testament was left unvisited.<sup>2</sup>

The strongest motive for medieval European travel to the Near East was, therefore, mainly religious. This applies to English travellers as well. Though the shores of the eastern Mediterranean have been visited by Britons from very early times,<sup>3</sup> the earliest recorded journals are those of pilgrims. Medieval English travellers to the Near East had their eyes fixed upon the Holy Land, and were led, partly, no doubt, by a love of adventure, but chiefly, by a pious curiosity, by 'an incredible desire to see those places . . . wherein Christ our Saviour performed and wrought all the mysteries of our redemption.'<sup>4</sup> The fall of Byzantine power in Syria, under the sweeping conquest of Islam, deprived the pilgrims of consider-

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<sup>1</sup> Lambert, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations . . . etc.*, Glasgow 1904, IV, 269 ff.; Wilhelm Heyd, *Geschichte des Levantehandels im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart, 1879, I, pp. 97-99.

<sup>4</sup> Hakluyt, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

able security and protection. Nevertheless, at first the flow of European pilgrims to the Holy Land was not seriously interrupted, and pilgrims still reached Jerusalem.

### 1. *St. Willibald* (723)

One of the first Englishmen to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem was St. Willibald,<sup>1</sup> of Bishop's Walton, in Hampshire, who, as an assistant of St. Boniface in Germany, was consecrated in Salzburg to the bishopric of Eichstädt in 741, and had to spend the rest of his life on German soil. His life and pilgrimage were written by a Saxon nun of Heidenheim, most probably dictated by himself, the finishing touches being added by another hand after his death.<sup>2</sup> His itinerary, thus, represents the first work that we know to have been written by an English woman.<sup>3</sup> In his boyhood he was sent to the monastery of Waltham to be educated. Here he conceived the idea of a pilgrimage, and persuaded his father and brother to set out with him for Rome in the summer of 721. At Lucca Willibald's father died,<sup>4</sup> but he and his brother continued their dangerous journey to Rome. Here Willibald formed the design of his Palestinian pilgrimage. In the spring of 723,<sup>5</sup> they went by land across Terracina toward the south to Gaeta, where they embarked for the first time, sailing in the lower Italian and Greek waters, disembarking at Ephesus, and for the first time stepping on Near East soil. They wandered along the coast of Asia Minor, then crossed over to Tortosa, and proceeded to the tower of Emessa (Ḥums). Having no passports, they were arrested here by Moslem authorities and were taken for spies. But they met great sympathy and help from the Christian inhabitants of Emessa. To quote Baumstark, '... Ein

<sup>1</sup> *Vita seu Hodoeporicon Sancti Willibaldi Scriptum a Sanctimoniali*, published by Mabillon in the *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Benedicti*, IV, 365 ff, and by Titus Tobler and Augustus Molinier in *Descriptiones Terrae Sanctae*, Genevae, 1877, 1880, pp. 1-55. For further information on St. Willibald, see: *Dictionary of National Biography*; Sidney Heath, *Pilgrim Life in the Middle Ages*, London, 1911, pp. 148-155; also, Anton Baumstark, *Abendländische Palästina-pilger des ersten Jahrtausends und ihre Berichte* (Görres-Gesellschaft) Köln, 1906; Lambert, p. 23; Beazley, C. R., *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. I, 1897, pp. 140-57.

<sup>2</sup> Heath, 148; DNB; Baumstark, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Heath, 148.

<sup>4</sup> Lambert falsely states that all three 'were arrested as spies... at Emesa', which he falsely too places in Asia Minor. p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> DNB gives the year 722, whereas Heath states 723, p. 151, and Baumstark gives the same year (723), p. 22.

christlicher Kaufmann suchte sein Seelenheil dadurch zu befördern, daß er alles daran setzte, die Gefangenen zu befreien oder doch ihre Lage zu lindern. Täglich schickte er ihnen Frühstück und Hauptmahlzeit. Jeden Mittwoch und Samstag führte sie sein Sohn aus dem Gewahrsam in ein Bad, jeden Sonntag nach der Kirche, und wenn man auf diesem Ausgängen durch die Bazarstraßen kam, kaufte ihnen der junge Mann von den Herrlichkeiten, die ihr Auge blendeten, was sie nur wollten. Ein Spanier, dessen Bruder Verbindungen im Serail besass, sprach alsdann einmal eingehend mit ihnen über ihre Lage, und seine Vermittlung hatte wesentlichen Anteil an ihrer Freilassung.<sup>1</sup> According to Lambert, it was the intervention of the Caliph Yazid the Second that rendered their narrow escape possible. "The master of the ship," writes Lambert, "which had brought the travellers from Cyprus was interrogated by the Caliph, who asked him whence his passengers had come. 'From the land of the sunset,' replied the master, 'beyond which we know not of earth but only waters.' 'If this be so,' pronounced the Caliph, 'Why punish them? They have done us no wrong. Set them free.'"<sup>2</sup>

Willibald proceeded to Damascus, and went southward to Jerusalem, where he visited all the famous shrines. He seems to have visited many parts of Syria and Palestine before he first arrived at Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> He even had plans to visit Mesopotamia, but had to abandon them because of passport difficulties. Owing to military operations in Syria, travellers were prohibited from using other routes but the few prescribed ones.<sup>4</sup> Finally Willibald left Syria about 726 after a narrow escape of martyrdom through smuggling balsam from Jerusalem. 'The export of this luxury was forbidden; but Willibald contrived to hide his package of balm in a vessel carrying petroleum, so that when he embarked at Tyre, the Customs House officers were unable to detect the contraband by its smell. This was one of the first occasions on which a tourist is recorded as proving a successful smuggler.'<sup>5</sup> In Constantinople

<sup>1</sup> Baumstark, pp. 27-28.

<sup>2</sup> Lambert, p. 23. Baumstark mentions this episode without relating the tale of the Caliph's intervention, p. 15. Heath, p. 152, only mentions the favourable impression which the pilgrims appeared to have made on the Saracens; Beazley, I, 150.

<sup>3</sup> For his route in Syria, see Baumstark, p. 20, and in Palestine, *ibid.* p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Baumstark, pp. 15 and 20.

<sup>5</sup> Lambert, p. 23; Beazley, *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, I, p. 153.

he spent two years, from 726 to 728, returning to Italy after an absence of seven years.

Willibald's book throws some light upon law and custom in Syria and Palestine in that early period of Islamic reign. Its value is great owing to the extreme scarcity of pilgrim writings during the eighth century. It was a time when pilgrimage in the East was a feat associated with the greatest hardships and danger, owing to lack of protection and general suspicion on the part of the Moslem inhabitants in European Christians. As Willibald was intent upon his devotions he gave only little general information. Of especial interest is his remark on the wealthy bazars of Ḥumş, whose rich articles filled Willibald, though a prisoner, with great admiration.<sup>1</sup> But there is another fact that gives Willibald's journal some weight of importance. It belongs to the first registered calls for the launching of a holy war against the 'infidels'. In Ḥumş, he and his party must have come in contact with several Christians who conveyed to them their sufferings and pains under the reign of the new rulers. It is natural that St. Willibald should become the herald of such sufferings, and know how to propagate them in Europe, and to convey the complains of the Christians of Nazareth against the Moslems who purchased their holiest Church from them.<sup>2</sup> In this respect, Willibald belongs to the earliest propagandists who prepared the idea of waging the crusadal wars to save the Holy Land, and secure safety and ease for further pilgrims.

The Crusades, in this sense, aimed at attaining and protecting the right of ordinary Christians to travel to the Holy Land. A number of institutions sprang up to offer their aid to future pilgrims. When travel to Syria acquired military and religious importance the Hospitallers and Templars acted as sole guardians of European travel to the Near East. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries in particular, the organisation of bands of pilgrims for Mediterranean voyages to the Holy Land became such a well-established business that the sight of these well filled pilgrims ships must have been almost as familiar to the shores of the eastern Mediterranean as are the excursion steamers to the present generation.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Baumstark, pp. 71 and 73.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 70.

<sup>3</sup> Heath, 157.

But the fall of Acre into the hands of the Egyptians in 1291 marks a new era in the history of the Crusades as well as in the European travel movement in the Near East. The fourteenth century formed, therefore, a period of propagandist activities in the West for the recovery of the Holy Land, and the re-establishment of the Christian Kingdom in Syria and Palestine, in which many notable men of letters and of the Church took an active part and devoted their efforts with some success.<sup>1</sup> English pilgrims had some share in this new branch of literature which, in volume and importance, occupied a notable place in the literature of the age.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. *Sir John de Mandeville* (1332)

In 1332, a certain Sir John de Mandeville, also known as Jean de Bourgogne,<sup>3</sup> made an extensive journey to the East, in which he visited Egypt and Palestine. The man and his work are subject to great controversy, and the authenticity and originality of his work have been hotly disputed. Even his English origin has not yet been definitely attested. His work consists of two parts, the first dealing with Egypt and the Holy Land, and the second with countries of the Middle and Far East, which he had never seen and the accounts of which he had derived from other travellers' and geographers' works.<sup>4</sup> He ostensibly left England on September 29, 1332, and, via Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Constantinople, arrived in Egypt, where he took service with the Sultan and fought against the Arabs. For the benefit of both pilgrims and Crusaders, he points out the roads leading to Jerusalem from the Syrian coastal towns and from Cairo by way of the 'Mountain of St. Catherine' in Sinai. For the Crusader, in particular, he gives an estimate of the armed forces of the Mamelukes and their military position, with a description of the degree of fortification in Egypt. He then proceeded to the Holy Land and claims to have wandered through Asia until he reached the dominions of the great Khan of Tartary,

<sup>1</sup> Aziz Surial Atiya, *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*, London, 1938, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> See the bibliography of European pilgrims during the 14th and 15th centuries appended to Atiya's work, p. 490.

<sup>3</sup> Mandeville's *Travels*, translated from the French of Jean d'Outremeuse, ed. P. Hamelius (2 vols., in *Early Eng. Text Society. Original Series*, London, 1919-23).

<sup>4</sup> DNB; Atiya, 165; Embacher, Friedrich, *Lexikon der Reisen und Entdeckungen*, Leipzig, 1882, p. 199.



under whom he again took military service. He returned to England after an absence of thirty-four years, and wrote an account of his adventures, which he dedicated to Edward III.<sup>1</sup> Nothing certain is known about the rest of his life, but he is thought to have died at Liège in 1372. A fourteenth-century MS of his travels is kept among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum, and the first printed edition was issued by Wynkyn de Worde in 1499, after which the work enjoyed great popularity during the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> One of the chief interests in this journal is the fact that it is one of the few descriptions of Islam in the literature of medieval Europe. Great entertainment lies in the combination between geography and natural history with romance and marvels, such as the fountain of youth and ant-hills of gold dust.

### 3. *Sir Thomas Swinburne* (1392)

Another rather curt and meagre account is that of the pilgrimage of Admiral Sir Thomas Swinburne, ancestor of the poet, written by a member of his train, bearing the name of Thomas Brigg.<sup>3</sup> Swinburne was Chastellain of Guisnes as he received permission from King Richard II to perform his pilgrimage in 1392. He must have been a man of some importance in his time, for after his return from the East, he occupied several administrative and diplomatic posts, ending in 1405 with his appointment to the admiralty of the English fleet at Bordeaux.<sup>4</sup>

Swinburne and his train left Guisnes on 6 August, 1392, and, joined on the Continent with other German and Bohemian pilgrims, landed at Alexandria, and proceeded to Cairo, where they saw the pyramids of Giza, the elephants and the giraffes. The pilgrims then took the road to Mount Sinai, where they remained 4 days at the Convent of St. Catherine. Then they proceeded to Gaza, whence they turned to Beirut via Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Damascus. On 15 January, 1393, they returned to Europe by way of Rhodes. The work is of some interest as to the expenses of the

<sup>1</sup> Heath, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto; DNB.

<sup>3</sup> *Itinirarium in Terram Sanctam Domini Thomae de Swynburne*, Ed. comte Riant, in *Archives de l'Orient Latin*, II.

<sup>4</sup> Documents, 380-8; Atiya, 177.

journey, by sea and by land, the prices of provisions, the custom duties and the interpreters' fees.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. *William Wey* (1458)

The failure of the Crusades induced a big number of European writers and men of thought to investigate the causes which led to the failure, and which had rendered the Moslems so formidable a menace to Christendom. However, devoted pilgrims continued to go to the Holy Land in considerable numbers during the fifteenth and part of the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Among the English pilgrims of this period was William Wey, a fellow of Eton College, who undertook two pilgrimages to Palestine.<sup>3</sup> In the first pilgrimage, Wey left Venice on 18 May, 1458, and reached Jaffa on 18 June, taking one month by sea. He arrived at Jerusalem six days later, and, after spending several days in the Holy City and in neighbouring towns, left for Jaffa on 2 July, and returned to Eton late in autumn, the whole journey having taken 39 weeks. On his second pilgrimage, he sailed from England on 13 March, 1462, and arrived at Jaffa on 16 July. 'This time he found Syria seething with civil disturbances as a result of fierce rivalries among the Mameluke amirs,'<sup>4</sup> which confined his movement to Jerusalem. He started home on 25 July, and landed in England on 1st December, where he devoted the rest of his days to the monastic life.

Wey's account is of considerable interest, as it represents the first practical guidebook to Palestinian travel in the English language. It gives information on the rates of exchange in the several countries to be traversed between England and the Holy Land, and the prices of provisions, and includes a separate itinerary and plan of the holy cities with their sacred relics and monuments, very much like a modern programme of sightseeing. There is even a table of Greek words for the convenience of other pilgrims in obtaining the daily necessities of life.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 178.

<sup>2</sup> Penrose, Boies, *Travel and Discovery in the Renaissance (1420-1620)*, Cambridge, Mass, 1955, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *The Itineraries of William Wey*, Roxburghe Club, London, 1857; DNB; Atiya, 215; Lambert, 30; Rice, W. G., *Early English Travellers to Greece and the Levant*, University of Michigan Publications, X, 1933, p. 208; Penrose, 32.

<sup>4</sup> Atiya, 218.

### 5. *Sir Richard Guylforde (1506)*

The next pilgrim after Wey was a man of some social and political import. Sir Richard Guylforde, who served in many posts under Henry VII, and was elected Knight of the Garter in 1500, made the pilgrimage to the Holy Land with John Whitby, the Prior of Gisburn, in 1506. Both died in Jerusalem, not being able to stand the change of climate, to which William Wey referred in his *Itinéraires*, warning his compatriots against any indiscretion of diet or exertion that might bring on the 'flyxe'.<sup>1</sup> The account was most probably written down by Guylforde's chaplain, and was first published by Richard Pynson in 1511.<sup>2</sup> Guylforde's party seems to have devoted much time to leisurely sight-seeing, and being comparatively well-to-do, spent many weeks at Venice to witness some of its great ceremonials.<sup>3</sup> They reached Jaffa on 18th August, and could not disembark for nine days, until the warden of Mount Sion came with the lords of Jerusalem and Rama, 'without whose escort no pilgrims were allowed to pass.' On landing they were subjected to so many discomforts, and were forced by the Mamelukes to spend a night and a day in a cave, that, in the words of the chaplain, 'bothe my mayster and mayster Pryor of Gysborne, were sore seke.'<sup>4</sup> When they reached Jerusalem, the prior died there on 5 September, and Guylforde the next day. The chaplain set out on his return journey sailing from Jaffa to Venice, and thence to England, which he reached after eighteen weeks.

With Guylforde and his party ends the chain of pilgrims who had no other interest or motive but to behold the heritage of Jesus Christ, and secure in Heaven the sweetness of Paradise and eternal life. These pilgrims took their long and risky route to the Near East, with no other motive in mind but the purely religious, and no other destination but the Holy Sepulchre.

### 6. *William Lily — Andrew Boorde (1538)*

But before we have done with this set of travellers, it may be noteworthy to mention two more of them, who, to be exact, visited

<sup>1</sup> Heath, 160.

<sup>2</sup> *The Pilgrimage of Sir Richard Guylforde to the Holy Land, A.D. 1506*, ed. Sir Henry Ellis, Camden Society, No. 51, 1851; DNB; Rice, 210. According to Lambert, p. 34, much of the text was a literal translation from Breidenbach's famous *Peregrinationes in Montem Zion*.

<sup>3</sup> Heath, 160.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 161.

the Holy Land on pilgrimages, but still had other major interests. The first was preoccupied with the pursuit of classical learning, and the second was a physician by profession, but a curious wanderer by inclination, whose restless spirit took him abroad no fewer than four times in the course of his busy life. In this respect, William Lily<sup>1</sup> (1468?-1522) and Andrew Boorde<sup>2</sup> (1490-1549) are the two English travellers who faintly draw the line between two periods of early English travel to the Near East before the eighteenth century. Lily, after his graduation from Magdalen College, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, about the last decade of the fifteenth century, and as he was returning thence 'made a prolonged stay in Rhodes where the garrison of the Knights of St. John then made a safe retreat for Western Christians'.<sup>3</sup> His enthusiasm for classical learning shows itself mainly in his wanderings in Italy where he perfected himself in the Latin and Greek languages and the knowledge of classical antiquity under John Sulpitius and Pomponius Sabinus. 'When he returned to England he became a prominent member of the little group of humanists there and became the trusted friend of Colet and More.'<sup>4</sup>

Andrew Boorde, on the other hand, spent a long period of his life studying and wandering in Europe. In one of his many journeys he visited Jerusalem in 1538, and gave an interesting description of Palestine, Constantinople and Turkey in general. In the meantime a new type of traveller was making his first appearance in Levantine waters, the forerunner of what was to prove a steady stream of English visitors to the Near East.

## B. TRAVEL FOR TRADE

With the middle of the sixteenth century begins a new phase of interest in the stream of English travel to the Near East. The pious traveller, the hermit and the devoted pilgrim no longer play the main rôle in the English touring movement to the East. A new influence, wider in its effect than piety, curiosity or adventure was beginning to attract a large number of Englishmen to the

<sup>1</sup> DNB.

<sup>2</sup> *Fyrst Booke of the Introduction of Knowledge*, ed. by F. H. Furnivall for the EETS (Extra Series, No. 10. London, 1870).

<sup>3</sup> Rice, 210.

<sup>4</sup> Ditto.; DNB.

East Mediterranean. All the explorations and discoveries of the sixteenth century were in the main incited by the hope of wealth either in putting a strong hand on oriental merchandise or through the discovery of a less arduous route to the rich trading centres of the East.<sup>1</sup> For trade with the East was at its climax, and European rivalries to hold the Eastern markets were at their utmost. Naturally, the nearer markets were in the Mediterranean, especially in the Levant, at the end of the great caravan route which had been the medieval link between Europe and the far distant countries of Asia.<sup>2</sup> There was profitable trade to be done in the Levant, and good relations had to be established with the Ottoman Empire which lay on and prevailed over the routes to India and Central Asia. In spite of the great hazards that associated the enterprise—incessant sea battles between the Venetians and the Turks, and menaces of the North African sallies—English ships from London, Southampton and Bristol were carrying on 'ordinary and usual trade' with Tripoli in Syria, as early as 1512.<sup>3</sup>

### 1. *Anthony Jenkinson (1546-1553)*

Anthony Jenkinson seems to have been the first English merchant to set foot in Asiatic Turkey in modern times.<sup>4</sup> When still a youth, he was sent into the Levant in 1546 to train for a mercantile career. During the following years he seems to have visited most of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean. In 1553, he was at Aleppo, and wrote an account of the entry of Sultan Sulaiman the Magnificent on 4 November. He was introduced to the Sultan and obtained from him *Niṣān-i-Šarīf*, a safe-conduct, directed to the totality of the Sultan's subjects, and permitting Jenkinson to trade in Turkey on the same terms as the French and the Venetians, without hindrance and free from any extraordinary custom or toll.<sup>5</sup> Jenkinson's mercantile activities sent him on many voyages, and into diverse countries and unknown lands. He was the first Englishman who penetrated into Central Asia, and his voyages, though

<sup>1</sup> James Winny, *The Elizabethan Voyages*, London, 1956, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations . . . etc.*, 62-3; Richard Hakluyt, *Voyages and Documents*, ed. Janet Hampden, London, 1958, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Zaki Saleh, *op. cit.*, 20; Penrose, 193.

<sup>5</sup> DNB; for the full text of the safe-conduct, see Hampden, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

undertaken mainly in the interests of commerce, served largely to extend geographical knowledge of districts unknown to Englishmen and travellers of his time <sup>1</sup>.

2. *William Harborne and the Establishment of the Levant Company*  
(1583)

However, for more than twenty years no English trader benefited from the Sultan's generous privileges granted to Jenkinson in 1553.<sup>2</sup> But in 1575, two prominent English merchants, Sir Edward Osborne and Richard Staper, sent agents to Constantinople to prepare the way for re-establishing English trade with the Levant on a more permanent and effectual basis. The mission was successful, and William Harborne, Sir Edward's factor, after a secret overland journey, arrived at Constantinople in October 1578. 'He behaved himself so wisely and discreetly, that within few months after he obtained not only the great Turkes large and ample priviledge . . . but also procured his honourable and friendly letters unto her Majestie.'<sup>3</sup> Harborne was able to obtain from the Sultan Murad III a *Ahd Name*, a Charter or Capitulation, in 1580, conferring ample privileges upon English merchants, and representing the earliest Anglo-Ottoman document of its kind.<sup>4</sup> To reward Sir Edward Osborne and Richard Staper for their great adventure and industry in opening new markets for the expanding and growing English foreign trade, queen Elizabeth granted them, with ten other merchants, for a term of seven years, a monopoly of English trade with the Levant. This was the nucleus of what came to be called the Levant Company, whose first governor Osborne became. To establish a firm foothold in Constantinople, and to be able to resist French intrigues at the Porte, Harborne made two journeys to England, and was successful in obtaining credentials from Queen Elizabeth nominating him Ambassador at Constantinople, with full power over all English subjects trading in Turkey, and authority to appoint consuls, and to issue regulations governing English activities in the Ottoman Empire. Harborne arrived in

<sup>1</sup> Penrose, pp. 193-5.

<sup>2</sup> Hampden, 146.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>4</sup> Zaki Saleh, 23.

Constantinople on 8 April, 1583, as Ambassador to the Porte, acting at the same time as the commercial agent of the Levant Company and standing on its pay-roll. One of the first acts of Harborne was to open an English consulate in Syria. Richard Forster was appointed as the first English consul in Syria on the 30th of June, 1583, with Tripoli as his residence. The jurisdiction of the first consul extended to Aleppo, Damascus, Tripoli, Jerusalem, Amman and all other parts of Syria and Palestine. This marks the beginning of the activities of the Levant Company in Syria.<sup>1</sup>

At the time of the arrival of the first English ambassador to Constantinople, there must have been a very large number of English traders in Tripoli and Aleppo.<sup>2</sup> The main interest of English trade in Syria was to exchange English wool for Persian silk and the galls of Mosul and Diarbakr. Syria was only the scene of this mercantile activity, and Tripoli was the only port open to European ships. It was well fortified, and gave the inhabitants some measure of security and a guarantee of defence against any possible European attack. It was a traditional Muslim policy inherited from the time of the Crusades to close all Syrian ports and keep them in ruin, with the exception of three or four fortified ones. But when the Beylerbey of Tripoli, Yūsuf Pasha Sifa, expelled the Europeans from Tripoli in 1613, the Ottomans had to allow them to use the port of Alexandretta in the same year. This was a more favourable step for the activity of the English traders; for they could settle in Aleppo, the emporium of Northern Persia, Mesopotamia, and Eastern Anatolia, and, in Alexandretta, they could receive their ships loaded with English woollen cloth, and send them back loaded with Persian silk.<sup>3</sup> This was the period of the revival of the Levant Company in Aleppo, which lasted for the next one and a half centuries.

Thus the establishment of the Levant Company marks the beginning of more substantial English contact with the Near East. The Company, with its trade monopoly, was a feature of that bold expansion of English maritime daring and commercial energy which marked the Elizabethan age. It was of great impor-

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<sup>1</sup> Gharaybeh, *op. cit.*, 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-12.

tance for conditions of travel at the time, first, because it enabled a rather large number of Englishmen to settle in the Levant, especially at Aleppo, for many years, and produced some very interesting accounts of the land in which they lived, and, secondly, because the Company's counters and consulates gave future travellers more protection and security, especially to the man of learning and leisure who was better equipped than merchants and sailors, to examine, observe and describe, with more intelligent interest and scholarly approach.

### C. TRAVEL FOR LEARNING

The great restlessness of the Elizabethan age to discover new realms and draw new boundaries to the limited body of knowledge inherited from medieval times, together with the undying struggle for wealth, expansion and colonization of virgin lands, resulted in bold feats of voyage and exploration, followed by a general enthusiasm for travel as an educating factor. In the words of Francis Bacon, 'there were always sent forth into several parts beyond the seas some young men of whom good hopes were conceived of their towardliness, to be trained up and made fit for such public employments, and to learn the languages. This was the charge of the Queen, which was not much; for they travelled but as private gentlemen, and as by their industry their deserts appeared, so were they further employed or rewarded.'<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. *Fynes Moryson* (1596)

To give vivid examples of this new type of traveller searching for knowledge, we shall deal now with the next group of English tourists to the Arab Near East. Fynes Moryson,<sup>2</sup> a graduate of Cambridge, and a Master of Arts of Oxford, was neither a professional seafarer nor a merchant, but an amateur traveller, and a searcher after the wonders of distant lands, whose enthusiasm to see foreign countries set him in 1591 on his ten years' travels to 'the twelve Dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, Switzerland, Netherland, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, Turkey, France, England, Scotland, & Ireland.' According to James Winny, 'Moryson's inordinate

<sup>1</sup> Cited from Lambert, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> An Itinerary, by Fynes Moryson (1617), Glasgow, 1907-8; DNB; Penrose, 228.



passion to visit foreign places, like the "hydroptic and immoderate desire of human learning and languages" that diverted Donne from the study of law, makes him characteristic of the Elizabethan voyagers . . . Men were feeling the clearly defined scope of medieval knowledge as a restraint upon their growing curiosity, and were pressing beyond these traditional bounds; committed to hardship and fearful risk as the cost of resolving the new sphere of human dominion.' <sup>1</sup> On 8 December, 1595, after having visited several European countries, Moryson started on a second journey in the company of a younger brother, Henry. In the spring of 1596 they landed in Jaffa, spent part of June at Jerusalem, and thence went by Tripoli and Aleppo to Antioch. After the death of Henry at Eilan, near Antioch, Fynes made for Constantinople, and thence, via Venice and Stade, reached London on 10 July 1597.

His travels illustrate the great perils that awaited tourists wandering in Europe at his time. His remarks and instructions to future travellers are, therefore, remarkably cautious. He gives precise statistics respecting the mileage of his daily journeys, and the varieties, in the value of the coins he encountered. The social historian may find great interest in his description of the inns in which he lodged, and of the customs and the food of the countries visited. In short his "encyclopedic writings are indeed a mighty source for Shakespeare's Europe." <sup>2</sup>

## 2. *Thomas Coryat* (1612)

Moryson's travels, however, were overshadowed by the wanderings of another vagabond thirteen years later. Thomas Coryat distinguished himself in his early life as a brilliant student of Greek at Oxford. Leaving without a degree, he hung around the Court of James I, gradually attracting the attention of the courtiers with his eccentric buffoonery and sharpwitted tongue. Later, he was attached to the household of Henry, Prince of Wales, where he was brought into familiar relations with all the eminent men of the time, who appear to have amused themselves greatly at his expense, but were sometimes sharply and rudely repaid for their abusiveness. Tired of his aimless life at court, Coryat started in 1608 his travels

<sup>1</sup> James Winny, *op. cit.*, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Penrose, 228.

abroad, chiefly on foot, through Europe and the East, which he subsequently described in his *Crudities*.<sup>1</sup> He first made a tour in France and Italy, using either a cart, a boat or a horse. From Venice he returned on foot the whole way back to London. There he was intent on publishing his account in spite of all the difficulties which he had to face. 'By his unwearied pertinacity and unblushing importunity [he] contrived to get together the most extraordinary collection of testimonials which have ever been gathered in a single sheaf. More than sixty of the most brilliant and illustrious litterati of the time were among the contributors to this strange farrago, the wits vying with one another in their attempts to produce mock heroic verses, turning Coryat to solemn ridicule.'<sup>2</sup> With the help of Prince Henry and Ben Jonson the book was published in 1611, and was sold on a large scale. Though the commendatory verses, edited by Ben Jonson, aimed at stamping the book as being 'a piece of Buffoonery from beginning to end', its value was soon recognized by a considerable number of readers and it remained for a long time the only reference to continental travel during the 17th century.

In 1612, 'after he had taken leave of his countrymen by an Oration spoken at the Cross in Odcombe', Coryat announced his intention of being absent for ten years, and formally hung up in the Church the shoes in which he had walked from Venice.<sup>3</sup> He sailed first to Constantinople, and after visiting Greece and Asia Minor, he arrived at Alexandria, to which he returned after a short visit to Cairo. Thence he proceeded to Palestine, the Dead Sea, and Lebanon. At Aleppo, he joined a caravan that was on its way to Mesopotamia, where he stood upon the mounds of Nimrud. He crossed Persia, and, via Candahar and Lahore, arrived safely at Agra in 1616, walking the whole way on foot.<sup>4</sup> Mastering the Turkish, Persian and Hindustani languages, and disguised in the native fashion, he was able to make his whole journey of ten months

<sup>1</sup> Coryats *Crudities*, 1611; DNB; Wood, *Athinae Oxoniensis*, London, 1721, I, 422 ff; Lambert, 44; Penrose, 227-28; Wright, Arnold, *Early English Adventures in the East*, London, 1944, p. 168; Oaten, Edward F., *European Travellers in India, etc.*, London, 1909, pp. 162-65. See also William Foster (editor), *Early Travels in India*, 1583-1619, Oxford, 1921, pp. 234-87.

<sup>2</sup> DNB.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Wood, op. cit., 422 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Alfons Gabriel, *Die Erforschung Persiens*, Wien, 1952, p. 68.

with only 50 shillings in his possession.<sup>1</sup> After four years in India he died of dysentery at Surat in 1617.<sup>2</sup>

Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador at the Court of the Mongol Emperor, wrote from India in 1616 that Coryat, on his way to India, saw every pile, pillar, statue and tomb, and examined every monument in the plain of Troy and in Persia, with extreme interest and untiring energy. His inquisitive mind, eager curiosity and energy as an investigator are praised and greatly acknowledged.<sup>3</sup> He was, in addition, one of the first collectors of marbles, but, unfortunately, most of his invaluable notes and remarks were lost on the way, except for a few letters which were published partially in 1616, entitled, 'Letters from Asmere, the Court of the Great Mogul, to several Persons of Quality in England', and partly in *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, in 1625.

### 3. *William Lithgow* (1610)

The fame of Thomas Coryat produced another imitator in the person of a Scottish contemporary, William Lithgow.<sup>4</sup> He was Coryats rival in his energy, as he claims in his account that his 'paynefull feet traced over thirty six thousand and odde miles, which draweth neare to twice the circumference of the whole Earth.'<sup>5</sup> Lithgow left Paris on 7 March 1610, and after many dangers from storms and sea-pirates, reached Constantinople, where he remained three months. Thence he sailed to Smyrna, Rhodes, Cyprus and disembarked at Tripoli. He crossed the Lebanon to Aleppo, and missed the Bagdad caravan, after an attempt to overtake it at Birejik on the Euphrates. After a winter at Aleppo, he set out with nine hundred Armenian pilgrims, six hundred Turkish merchants, and one hundred soldiers, and, by way of Damascus, Nazareth, Tyre, and Beersheba, arrived at Jerusalem on Palm Sunday 1610. He made excursions to the Dead Sea, Jericho, Bethlehem and Bethany. On 12 May he started for Cairo

<sup>1</sup> Ditto; Wright, 168-9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 173.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 69; Rice, 235-6; Lambert, 44; DNB.

<sup>4</sup> William Lithgow, *Totall Discourse of the Rare Adventures and Paynefull Peregrinations of long nineteene Yeares from Scotland to the most famous Kingdoms in Europe, Asia and Africa*, 1632.

<sup>5</sup> Lambert, 45; Rice, 222, Penrose, 228.

with 'eight hundred Copts and six German Protestants and four French Catholic gentlemen.'<sup>1</sup> Three of the Germans perished on the way, the other three in Cairo, which left him two thirds of their money (420 pounds), one third being surrendered to the Venetian consul. Having seen the pyramids and the sphinx, Lithgow sailed down the Nile to Alexandria, where he embarked for Ragusa with the Frenchmen. After the death of all four Frenchmen on the voyage, his reckless conscience would have urged him to put his hand on their property had it not been no more than sixty-nine sequins, and had the master of the ship not meddled with the affair. The rest of his return journey to England is full of adventures and turns of fortune, in North Africa and Spain, in which, however, his luck and recklessness, in many cases, saved his life. In Paris he ended his 'pedestriall pilgrimage', and, after his arrival in England, he soon visited the English court, where he presented King James, Queen Anne, and Prince Charles with certain rare gifts and relics brought from Jordan and Jerusalem.

His account is full of affectation and pretensions at a scholarly skill. According to Rice, 'his work shows no evidence that he had any deep classical training of any sort. It is unlikely, therefore, that in the notes which he made "on the spot" he included much classical allusion except that suggested to him by the tales of his guides. The parts of his narrative which go beyond the simple report of his experiences seem to have come out of a mind stocked with Greek and Latin, but from books at the writer's elbow.'<sup>2</sup> However, it remains a book of uncommon value and interest, for its description of men and manners in Europe and the East. It is probably the earliest authority for coffee-drinking in Europe, Turkish baths, a pigeon post between Aleppo and Bagdad, the long Turkish tobacco pipes, artificial incubation in Egypt, and the importation (since about 1550) of currants from Zante to England.<sup>3</sup>

#### 4. *George Sandys* (1610)

Lithgow's *Total Discourse* was surpassed in scope and wealth of classical allusion by another more literary and scholarly account

<sup>1</sup> DNB.

<sup>2</sup> Rice, p. 226 Footnote.

<sup>3</sup> DNB.

—that of George Sandys—which became the outstanding English travel-book on the Near East in the 17th century. Sandys<sup>1</sup>, the youngest son of Sir Edwin Sandys, the archbishop of York, after quitting Oxford without his degree, left England in 1610, when he was thirty-two, on an extended foreign tour over France and Italy to the East. After a year in Turkey, Egypt and Palestine, he returned to England, lingering some time in Rome to study its antiquities under the guidance of Nicholas Fitzherbert. Back in England, he published in 1615 the account of his travels, which enjoyed unsurpassed popularity until the third quarter of the 17th century. It ran to no less than 9 editions in half a century, from 1615 to 1673.<sup>2</sup> To the book is prefixed a map of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean, and the text itself is copiously illustrated. Sandys' repute in his own day is not to be accounted for by his travels only, but also by his poetical efforts. Dryden called him 'the best versifier of the former age', probably having in mind Sandys' translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.<sup>3</sup> Sandys' account reveals an intelligent mind, sharp observation, and careful and accurate reporting uncommon among previous or contemporary travellers. He is the first to reveal that interest in archaeology which was to obsess later visitors. His method of setting his personal comments and matter-of-fact observations in a geographical and historical framework, which prevailed among later travellers, testifies his regard for classical learning and antiquity. In this respect he is very much indebted for information to Pliny and Strabo. While he shows great interest in the old monuments of Palestine, it seems strange that he was silent with regard to the antiquities of Hellas. His visit to the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem inspires 'A hymn to my Redeemer'—an outburst of fervent verse, which gave Milton hints for his 'Ode on the Passion' (stanza vii).<sup>4</sup> From Sandys also we learn of the predominance of English trade in Acre and Sidon up to the beginning of the 17th century.<sup>5</sup> Though Sandys's frame is sometimes too elaborate for his picture, a personal style lends unity

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<sup>1</sup> Relation of a Journey begun Anno Domini 1610, in Four Books, 1615; DNB; Rice, 228-29; Fedden, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Rice, 226-27; DNB.

<sup>3</sup> DNB; Fedden, 9.

<sup>4</sup> DNB.

<sup>5</sup> Gharaybeh, 10.

to this amalgam of incident and learning. Condensed, balanced, suited to convey ideas of some complexity, the style is capable of modulation, and Sandys could skilfully suit the measure of his prose to the subject in hand. When dealing with serious matters his manners is sonorous; when rude fact is his theme it becomes effectively laconic.<sup>1</sup> His descriptions of the desert, the camel and the Bedouin offered scopes of interest to the English reader, and opened new realms of imagination untrodden before. The treatment of this uncommon theme of the desert and its world started by Sandys, was perfected two and a half centuries later by the poet of desert travel, Charles Doughty.

#### 5. *Sir Henry Blount* (1634)

Twenty-four years after Sandys' tour, another journey to the Near East was undertaken by Sir Henry Blount, graduate of Oxford, knight and royalist.<sup>2</sup> The motive of the journey is his curiosity to know more about the Ottoman Empire, the Court of the Grand Signor, and the valley of the Nile, the attractions of most Europeans of the time. To be precise he was bent on observing the 'religion, manners, and policy of the Turks', in order to determine 'whether to an impartial conceit, the Turkish way appear absolutely barbarous, as we are given to understand', and was anxious to acquaint himself with 'those other sects which live under the Turks, as Greeks, Armenians, Freinks, and Zinganes, but especially the Jews'. Like Sandys, to whom he owes much in the method of treatment, Blount represents the sophisticated and scholarly type of traveller that was taking the lead in the whole travel movement of the 17th century. On 7 May, 1634, he left Venice in a Venetian galley, and sailed down the Adriatic to Split in Dalmatia. Then he travelled across the Balkans, until he reached Constantinople after a land journey of 1,500 miles in 52 days. He crossed by sea to Alexandria accompanying the Turkish fleet bound for Egypt. From Alexandria he sailed up the Nile to Cairo which he reached after 5 days, and where he took up his quarters in the house of a Venetian gentleman. Of all the antiquities of Egypt, he was mainly attracted by the tables of Isis, which he failed to decipher. His two principal

<sup>1</sup> Fedden, 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Voyage to the Levant*, 1636; DNB.

excursions were to the interior of the Great Pyramid of Giza, and to the Labyrinth in the Fayyum. He left Cairo in November, and took passage on board a French ship at Alexandria bound for Italy. Via Rome, Florence and Bologna, he returned to Venice, where he arrived after 11 months, having crossed about six thousand miles. In 1636 he published his *Voyage to the Levent*, which established his fame as an author and traveller. In 35 years it passed through no less than eight editions, with a German one in 1687. Blount enjoyed sturdy independence of thought, together with keen powers of observation of men and manners, which give his account a refreshing flavour, and make it readable even today.

#### CONCLUSION

From the foregoing survey, we have seen that the beginnings of English interest in the Near East were predominantly of a religious nature, finding their expression in the course of the pilgrimages to the Holy Land, which first took a peaceful form, and later assumed that militant character that preceded the Turkish conquests in Europe. The journeys of those early pilgrims were not devoid of all importance, as they fixed the routes which were to be used for centuries by future generations of travellers to the east Mediterranean. When the mercantile activities replaced the pilgrimages in the Levant, travel in the Near East had become for Europeans an affair of extreme danger, for, in addition to the bloody rivalries among European traders themselves, there were the incessant menaces of Turkish ships and Algerian corsairs, with all the tortures of piratical assails and captivities. But the establishment of the Levant Company with its capitulations in Constantinople improved this condition for English travellers by placing an English ambassador at the Porte, and raising consulates and counters in Syria and Egypt. After this time a large number of English travellers began to make their appearance in the Near East driven mainly by their curiosity to study the state of their contemporaries, the Moslem Turks, who, though beginning to decline as a powerful nation, were still powerful enough to attract attention and give rise to a large number of accounts and travel-books. On the whole, these travel-books reveal little contact with the native people of the countries visited, and show but a meagre understanding of

their history and classical background. The eighteenth century improves upon this understanding, and increases the interest of Englishmen in this area in more than one field. This will be the subject of the next chapters.

## PART TWO

### TRAVELLERS OF THE 18th CENTURY (Their Biographies, Routes and Works)

#### A. NEAR EASTERN GRAND TOURS

The idea of the Grand Tour made its appearance in England during the Elizabethan age when the high ideals of travel as a means of education were widely recognized and enthusiastically put into practice. The first actual mention of the Grand Tour is made in Richard Lassels' *Voyage of Italy* (1670), alluding to "the Grand Tour of France and the Giro of Italy."<sup>1</sup> These two European countries were the centre of attraction for all Englishmen of the upper classes,<sup>2</sup> the English aristocracy having little confidence in their country's culture, could not resist the influences of French culture and Italian art on their life.<sup>3</sup> Their furniture was French, and most of their pictures were bought either in Italy or in France. The style of their houses, gardens and decoration was an imitation of Italian architecture, and foreign artists, such as Artari, Verrio, Laguerre, Rysbrack and others left their unforgotten works of art in the homes of the English landed nobility and the growing class of rich merchants. As the eyes of the "polished" aristocracy were fixed on Paris and Rome, the solid wealthy merchants looked to Holland, envying its maritime power and its advanced agriculture. "It was from Dutch sources that the ideas which were to revolutionize British agriculture often came."<sup>4</sup> These aspirations to learn from France, Italy and the "Low Countries" made the Continental Grand Tour an essential requisite for an Englishman with any pretensions to culture and breeding.

<sup>1</sup> Lambert, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> See above, Introduction, pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> Dorothy Marshall, *English people in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1956, p. 2; J. H. Plumb, *The First Four Georges*, London, 1956, p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 3.



By the approach of the eighteenth century, the Grand Tour had become an established tradition and an almost integral part of the education of the well-to-do graduates of Oxford and Cambridge. It became even the hallmark of an aristocratic education, for it was a highly expensive enterprise open only to the sons of the aristocracy, the gentry and the wealthy merchants.<sup>1</sup> It was therefore usual to dispatch the young graduate to Europe in charge of a tutor who was chosen for his character and learning. In France the young tourist acquired French manners and culture, and in Italy he learnt to appreciate painting and sculpture. The scope of the tour might vary considerably, from a purely educational trip lasting a few weeks, to a long sojourn in the great cities that might extend to several years. There the connections between "good society" in England and on the Continent were established, and the English visitor "returned ready for the seat in Parliament or other comfortable niche that his family had reserved for him."<sup>2</sup>

English educated people of the eighteenth century were held in thrall by the ancient world of Greece and Rome, which epitomized the virtues they sought. The study of Latin and Greek, the core of their education, led them to visit Greece and to develop a growing interest in Hellenic antiquity. This brought them into close contact with another world, to them a formidable and an unfathomable one—that of the Ottoman Empire which perched on East Europe, and threatened the whole Christian existence and civilization. The attraction of the Islamic world under the Ottoman Turks was great, and tempted many Englishmen on the Grand Tour to explore it and unveil its exotic secrets. This, in addition to the European wars during the reign of the four Georges in England, the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon, led to the extension of the Grand Tour further to the Near East, which, of course, showed itself best and on the largest scale during the first half of the nineteenth century.

### 1. *Ellis Veryard* (1686)

*Route:* Holland (April 6, 1682) – France – Italy (Leghorn, 15. 2. 1686) – Alexandria – Rosetta – Cairo – Suez – Tor – Mount Sinai – Cairo – Dumiāt – Jaffa – Caesaria – Tyre – Sidon – Tripoli – Mount Lebanon – Balbeck – Tripoli – Antioch – Cyprus – Rhodus – The Archipelago.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Muriel Jaeger, *Before Victoria*, London, 1956, pp. 81-2; R. J. Mitchell and M. D. R. Leys, *A History of the English People*, London, 1951, p. 434.

All that we know about this traveller is that he was a physician with a strong curiosity to learn from the world and its peoples. His motives of travel were to study men and manners, to understand other nations' institutions, customs and ways of living. He wanted to gain experience, good education and a cultivated manner of conversation, and acquire foreign languages to converse with the learned and improve his talent, and contact even the most illiterate peasants, who may prove to be jewels hidden in the gutter. His account appeared as:

An Account of divers Choice Remarks, as well Geographical as Historical, Political, Mathematical, Physical and Moral; Taken in a Journey through the Low-Countries, France, Italy, and Parts of Spain; with the Isles of Sicily and Malta. As also a Voyage to the Levant: A Description of Candia, Egypt, the Red Sea, the Deserts of Arabia, Mount-Horeb, and Mount-Sinai; the Coast of Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor; the Hellespont, Propontis, and Constantinople; the Isles of the Carpathian, Egean, and Ionian Seas. Wherein, Their present State, Interest, Customs, Manners, and Religion; their Learning and Learned Men; the most celebrated Pieces of Sculpture, Painting . . . are more accurately set forth, than hitherto been done. With the Account of divers Sorts of Shell-like Bodies found at great Distances from the Seas; with Remarks thereon, in a Way to discover their Original. And what else occurred Remarkable in Thirteen Years Travels. London, 1701<sup>1</sup>.

The section about the Arab Near East covers the pages 287 to 326, and may be divided into two main parts: (1) a topographical description of Egypt and Lebanon, including the Nile and its flood, and (2) an exposition of the institutions, religions and social conditions in Egypt, with almost no treatment of Lebanon in this respect. Of course, the division is not as plain as that, for the bits of information are dispersed in a very unsystematic manner throughout the book. In Egypt he shows particular interest in remarkable historical and biblical places. In his detailed description of the pyramids, of the Sphinx and of the catacombs at Saqara, he attaches historical comments on the ancient Egyptians based on classical authorities,<sup>2</sup> and in many places shows a sound knowledge of Egypt's history.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, he opens his ears to many superstitions, and, occasionally, depends on hearsay, which leads him to some superfluous digressions.<sup>4</sup> In Syria he gives very brief accounts of Jaffa, Sidon, Tyre, Tripoli, Ihdin, Balbeck and Antioch, with remarks on their ancient history. Veryard devotes a big part of this section

<sup>1</sup> This is the only edition of this account.

<sup>2</sup> Veryard, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 292 & 308-9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 295-6.

to religions in Egypt and Lebanon, where he points out the sharp differences among the various Christian sects in Egypt: the Copts, the Greeks, the Roman Catholics, the Armenians and the Abyssinians. He is almost silent on the subject of the Maronites in Lebanon, only stating that they have a College at Rome, where their priests are educated before their ordination.

On the whole, Veryard's account, though of some interest, remains of little value as a reference on Egypt and Syria at the close of the 17th century. The historical comments are mostly copied from classical authorities, and the personal remarks on the contemporary countries and their inhabitants are fanatical and rely on very little contact.

## 2. *Aaron Hill* (1700)

The next Englishman to visit the Near East on the Grand Tour after Veryard was Aaron Hill, a minor poet and playwright and a less authentic traveller. He was born in 1685, and, losing his father in his infancy, he was brought up by his mother and grandmother. After some years of education at Barnstaple grammar school and Westminster, he sailed on the 2nd of March, 1699-1700, when he was only 14 years of age, to Constantinople, where a relation, Lord Paget, was then ambassador. Paget received him kindly, and sent him to travel in the Near East with a tutor. In 1703 Hill returned with Paget, and in 1709 published:

A Full and Just Account of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire in all its Branches of the Government, Policy, Religion, Customs and Way of Living of the Turks in General; faithfully related from serious Observations taken in many years' Travels through those Countries. Portrait and plates. London, 1709.<sup>1</sup>

Hill's life is a series of unsuccessful literary attempts, the first of which was his account of his travels. He wrote several plays and pamphlets which failed owing to his exaggerated belief in his own gifts, both for literature and speculation, and to his absurd self-importance and pomposity. He is better known by his relations with Alexander Pope, who satirized and attacked him on several occasions.<sup>2</sup> We have no idea as to the route or duration of Hill's travels in Egypt and Syria, for there is no mention of them. His

<sup>1</sup> Another edition (B), London, 1733. Quotations were made from the first edition (A).

<sup>2</sup> DNB.

account is a strange mixture of information about the Turkish system of government and administration in general, with dramatic episodes supposed to be derived out of the traveller's own experience. It was still possible for travellers like Hill to take advantage of the credulous readers at home who believed that ostriches used their tails as sunshades, and that crocodiles refrained from attacking Christians, and relate tales without the least heed for future scrutiny. Thus he tells a long dramatic story of his descent into the Great Pyramid and his emergence by a subterraneous passage in the head of the Sphinx half a mile away.<sup>1</sup> In Gaza he pretends to have seen ruins of the Philistines' temple, "where Sampson pulled the pillars and killed himself and a vast number of the Philistines."<sup>2</sup> Many years later, he acknowledged his dishonesty, and was thoroughly ashamed of his work.<sup>3</sup> However, he gives a fairly good description of Cairo and Alexandria, and of the most important cities in Syria and Palestine. A considerable part of Hill's account deals with areas which he had never seen: Arabia the desert, Arabia the stony, and Arabia the happy. This gave his fancy rich material for amusing stories and fairy tales.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. *Richard Pococke (1737)*

*Route:* Leghorn (7 Sept. 1737) – Alexandria (29 Sept.) – Rosetta – Cairo – (up the Nile): Bani Su uaif – Sharūna – Abu Girg – Bani Mazār – Samalūt – Al Minya – Mallāwi – Manfalūt – Asyūt – Abu Ṭig – Akmīm – Girga – Farshūt – Dandara – Qīnā – Al Karnak – Luxur – Isna – Idfu – Aswān – back to Cairo – Dumiāt – Jaffa – Ramlih – Jerusalem – the river Jordan – the Dead Sea – Ramlih – Al Lidd – Jazīr – Jaffa – Acre – Nazareth – Mount Tabor – the Sea of Galilee – Ṣafad – Acre – Tyre – Sidon – Beirūt – Tripoli – Balbeck – Damascus – Ṣaḥnāyā – Dārayyā – Dummar – Ṣidnāyā – Ḥumṣ – Al Rastan – Ḥamā – Maʿarrat al Nuʿmān – Munṭif – Aleppo – ʿAintāb – ʿUrfa – Ḥarrān – Beer – Minbij – Al Bāb – Tēdif – Dahab – Aleppo – Shaikh Barakāt – Jisr al Ḥadīd – Bailān – Iskanderūn – Jabal Al Aqraʿ – Bait al Māʿ – Latakia – Jebilee – Bāniās – Tortosa – the Island of Arwād – Tripoli – Cyprus – Egypt (25 December 1738) – Sinai Desert – Cairo – Rosetta – Alexandria – Crete – Europe (Messina in November, 1740).

Thirty years had passed since Hill's tour when Richard Pococke made his celebrated journey to the Near East in 1737, which was related in his:

<sup>1</sup> Hill, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-57.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> DNB.; Samuel Richardson, *Correspondence*, 1802, I, pp. 25-8.

<sup>4</sup> Hill, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-16.

Description of the East, and some other Countries: Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Cyprus, Candia, Greece, Asia Minor, . . . 178 large plates of views, plans, details, plants, etc. 2 vols. London, 1743-45.<sup>1</sup>

This is justly considered the fullest and most authoritative English travel-book on the Levant in the 18th century.<sup>2</sup> Pococke was born at Southampton in 1704, had his early education at Highclere rectory, Hampshire: matriculated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1720, and graduated B.A. 1725, B.C.L. 1731, D.C.L. 1733. In 1725 he was appointed to the precentorship of Lismore Cathedral by his uncle Thomas Milles, bishop of Waterford and Lismore, of whose dioceses he in 1734 became vicar-general. He occupied many clerical positions in Ireland, where he encouraged Irish manufactures, and about 1763 established the Lintown factory near Kilcullen for the instruction of foundlings in the art of weaving. A little time before his death in 1765, he had been appointed to the bishopric of Meath, where, in the demesne at Ardbraccan, he planted the seeds of the cedars of Lebanon, still standing to this day. He was imbued with an unusual passion for travel which showed itself all through his life. From 1733 to 1736 he made tours in France, Italy, and other parts of Europe, with his cousin Jeremiah Milles, dean of Exeter. Later on, he planned his visit to the East, which took him nearly five years, from the end of 1737 to 1742. After his return from this Near Eastern Tour, passing through Germany, he decided to explore the Alps. On 19 June 1741, with an armed

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the quoted edition (A), there appeared the following editions:

B. London, 1771.

C. In Pinkerton's Collection of Voyages and Travels X, pp. 406-770, and XV, pp. 163-402.

*German Translation:*

D. Beschreibung des Morgenlandes und einiger anderer Länder, übersetzt von Christ. Ernst von Windheim. 3 vols. Erlangen, 1754-55.

*French Translation:*

E. Voyages dans l'Egypte, l'Arabie, la Palestine, la Syrie, la Grèce, la Thrace, . . . contenant une description exacte de l'Orient et de plusieurs autres contrées: comme la France, l'Italie, l'Allemagne, la Pologne, la Hongrie, . . . et des observations intéressantes sur les mœurs, la religion, les lois, le gouvernement, les arts, les sciences, le commerce, la géographie et l'histoire naturelle et civile de chaque pays, et généralement sur toutes les curiosités de la nature et de l'art qui s'y trouvent; traduits de l'Anglais sur seconde édition, par une société de gens de lettres. 7 vols. Paris, 1772-73.

*Dutch Translation:*

F. Beschryving van het Oosten, en van eenige andere Landen. 3 deelen in 6 stukken. Uit het Engelsch overgezet en met aantekeningen voorzien door E. W. Cramer. Utrecht, 1776-1786.

Quotations from edition (A).

<sup>2</sup> Fedden, op. cit., 14.

party, he discovered the Mer de Glace in the valley of Chamonix. An account of the expedition appeared in the 'Mercure de Suisse' for 1743, and Pococke came to be regarded as the pioneer of Alpine travel. He also made several tours in England, Scotland and Ireland between 1747 and 1760, which were not published until 1888-1891.<sup>1</sup> He was a member of the Egyptian Club and of the Spalding Society, and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society on 11 Feb. 1741. He left a great collection of Greek, Roman, and English coins and medals, together with antiquities, minerals and fossils.

Pococke was a great traveller who wandered with a real love and passion for travel, and combined in his personality most of the qualities that make a real traveller: sharp observation, determined will-power and courage. In addition, he was honest in recording his observations, and was well-equipped with a sound education and considerable knowledge. His *Description of the East* brought him fame above all for the research which he made into the antiquities of Egypt, Palestine and Syria.<sup>2</sup> With a profound knowledge of classical history and geography, he incessantly compares the condition of these antiquities with the descriptions of the classical writers. The ruins of the monuments still existing in Syria and Egypt are compared by Pococke with the accounts of their splendour which Herodotus, Diodorus of Sicily, Pliny and others have left us. In Egypt he gives detailed descriptions of the Pyramids of Giza, the Sphinx, the catacombs and pyramids of Saqara, the temples, pillars, porticoes, grottoes and Christian convents in the surroundings of Akmim. He also describes the ruins of Thebes, the temple and gates of Karnak, the sepulchres of the kings of Thebes, the statues of Memnon and Osymanduas, and the latter's sepulchre and mausoleum at Thebes. He is fascinated by the statues of Isis and Osiris, and with great care examines different forms of Egyptian pillars, capitals, entablatures, and cornices at Luxor, Dandara and Karnak. He discusses ancient Egyptian mythology and its origin, compares Egyptian deities with those of the Greeks, and gives some observations on the hieroglyphs of the ancient Egyptians, and their methods of embalming human bodies and birds. The *Description*, in addition, is full of remarks on contempo-

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<sup>1</sup> Cox, op. cit., p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> Pococke, vol. I, p. 222.

rary Egypt, especially the general presentation of the city of Cairo. There are three particular points which are of special interest in Pococke's description of his journey to Palestine and Syria: (1) The description of the area around Lake Tiberias, of Safad, on the Jarmaq Mountain, and the surrounding villages, which is the only report on this area among our travellers in the eighteenth century. (2) The exploration of Christian antiquities and ruins of earlier Christian civilisation in Syria in the area around Ma' arrat-en-Nu'mān and Erriḥa. (3) The interesting account of the rather active trade, north-east of Aleppo, especially centered in Urfa and Diarbakr, and the trade-traffic via Mossul to Basra.

To conclude, we may well quote Fedden on Pococke: "... He possessed industry, catholic tastes, a balanced judgment, a scrupulous regard for truth, and, as Gibbon noted, 'superior learning and dignity.' On his travels little escaped him. Though as befitted an eighteenth-century gentleman, archaeology was his first interest and he produced drawings of Egyptian antiquities that are among the earliest careful records, his detailed and sober report covered almost every aspect of life in the Levant: Turkish government and justice, religion, trade, manners and customs, and natural history. Pococke in fact produced the best of those travel-books, so characteristic of the period, designed primarily to impart information. It was ultimately such writers, generously and accurately providing the information that Europe wanted, who made the *genre* superfluous. Though travellers took a century to realize it, there was little to be done in the same vein after the publication of works such as *A Description of the East*." <sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Charles Perry (1739)

*Route:* (date of journey not given) France – Italy – Constantinople – Rhodes – Cyprus – Jaffa – Ramlah – Al-Lidd – Jerusalem – Bethany (Bisān) – Bethlehem – Jaffa – Acre – Nazareth – Mount Ṭabūr – Lake Tiberias – Nazareth – Acre – Tyre – Sidon – Damascus – Sidon – Beirut – Jubeil – Tripoli – Tortosa – Latakia – Idlib – Aleppo – Antioch – Latakia – Cyprus – Dumiāt – Cairo – Bani Swaif – Manfalūt – Asiūt – Akhmim – Girga – Faršūt – Qusair Dandara – Qina – Karnak – Luxur – Al-Qurna – Armint – Isna – Aswan (back to Cairo almost by the same route) – Kunḡinan – Bedrasin (Memphis) – Metrehana – Tamia – Fayyūm – Cairo – Alexandria – Rosetta – Alexandria – Rhodes.

Charles Perry made his journey to the Near East two years after Pococke's tour. He visited first Syria and Palestine, and then

<sup>1</sup> Fedden, pp. 13-14; about R. Pococke cf. Volney, *Voyage...*, Paris 1792, I, 52.

came into Egypt, where he followed Pococke's steps into Upper Egypt, and gave an equally interesting and reliable description of its temples and great monuments. Perry was born in 1698 as the Son of John Perry, a Norwich attorney. He spent four years at Norwich grammar school, and afterwards a similar period at a school in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. After five years at Caius College, Cambridge, he graduated M.B. in 1722, and M.D. in 1727. In 1723 he also graduated at Leyden. In 1739 he started his Grand Tour to France, Italy and the East which ended in 1742. On his return he published his valuable account:

A View of the Levant: particularly of Constantinople, Syria, Egypt, and Greece, in which their Antiquities, Government, Politics, Maxims, Manners and Customs (with many other Circumstances and Contingencies), are attempted to be described and treated on. London, 1743.<sup>1</sup>

Perry reveals in his journal considerable knowledge and learning, and his interest is mainly archaeological, especially in the portion on the temples of Karnak and Luxor. But he lacked Pococke's spirit of adventure and perseverance. On many occasions he is prevented from proceeding further, either because his destination appears inaccessible, or because Arab Shaikhs warn him of some danger or other likely to attend him in his ascent of the Nile. In his Upper Egyptian expedition, he bitterly criticizes the French antiquarian and traveller Lucas,<sup>2</sup> charging him sarcastically with many exaggerations and inexactitudes. Lowndes remarks about Perry's work that it is much less known than it deserves to be,<sup>3</sup> and Cox, alluding to its two German translations, wonders why no French one was ever made.<sup>4</sup>

### 5. *John Montague, Earl of Sandwich* (1739)

*Route:* France – Italy – Greek Islands – Constantinople – Smyrna – Alexandria (16 Sept.) – Rosetta – Cairo – Giza – Saqara – Matariya – Cairo – Rosetta – Alexandria – Europe.

In 1739, the same year as that in which Perry was touring in the Arab Near East, the 21-year-old John Montague, fourth earl of Sandwich, was making the same journey with his tutor. Thirty-one years later, in 1770, when Montague had become a notable person

<sup>1</sup> Another new edition, 3 vols., London, 1773. Twice translated into German. Quotations from edition (A)

<sup>2</sup> Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 337. For Lucas see: *Biographie Universelle*.

<sup>3</sup> Cox, p. 224.

<sup>4</sup> Ditto.



of influence in English public life, a reissue of Perry's *View of the Levant* appeared dedicated to him. Montague was born in 1718 as the eldest son of Edward Richard Montague, viscount Hinchinbroke, and was grandson of Edward, third earl of Sandwich, whom he succeeded in the peerage at the age of eleven. After some years at Eton, John entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1735. He remained there for two years, but left without a degree, and went to the Continent. After 12 months in France, he started in 1738 with his tutor on a prolonged tour around the Mediterranean, which took him to Italy, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Spain and Portugal. Directly after his return to England he was elected, at that early age, a fellow of the Royal Society. His relations with Anson and other men of influence paved him the way for several important posts.<sup>1</sup> His book was not published until seven years after his death, bearing the title:

A voyage performed by the late Earl of Sandwich round the Mediterranean in the years 1738 and 1739, written by himself, embellished with a portrait of his lordship, and illustrated with several engravings of antient buildings and inscriptions, with a chart of his course; to which are prefixed memoirs of the noble author's life, by John Cooke . . . London, 1799 <sup>2</sup>.

From its character, style and numerous classical quotations, it is believed that the account was either written or corrected by Montague's tutor, whose name is still unknown.<sup>3</sup> However, it does not add anything essential to what Pococke and Perry have left us.

## B. ENGLISH RESIDENTS IN THE ARAB NEAR EAST

As pointed out above,<sup>4</sup> the establishment of the Levant Company in 1583 was of great importance for conditions of travel. After James I had granted in 1606 letters patent to the Company to secure its trade monopoly, it was established on a permanent basis, and lived an active life of 244 years, accumulating great wealth for England, and serving in the development of art and research, the suppression of slavery and the spread of western civilization in the Near East.<sup>5</sup> The monopoly enabled the Company

<sup>1</sup> DNB.

<sup>2</sup> Only edition.

<sup>3</sup> DNB.

<sup>4</sup> See above, part I, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> J. Theodore Bent, *The English in the Levant*, in *The English Historical Review*, V, October, 1890, p. 654.

from the beginning to appoint and pay the consuls and ambassadors at Constantinople, Smyrna, Aleppo, Alexandria, Algiers, Patras, and other places. To give the company more power, and secure its interests against any dangers, its charter, after a petition to Parliament in 1753, was remodelled, and "they (the Company) were to have unmolested choice of the ministers maintained by them at home and abroad, ambassadors, governors, deputies, consuls, or otherwise, nobody except free brothers of the corporation could send ships into those parts, and very stringent rules were made on this point, full power being given to the Company to fine, imprison, and send home in custody any individuals who infringed this rule." <sup>1</sup> The Company continued to flourish until 1803, when the English government assumed the appointment and payment of the ambassador and his secretaries. Foreign policy then began to have the upper hand above the interests of trade, when the Eastern question, and the conflict between the Balkan states and Turkey were the actual problems of the day. The Levant Company had to give way, and in 1825 dissolved itself. <sup>2</sup> During the flourishing years of the Company, the principal mart of English trade was Aleppo, where a whole English community was resident for generations, with its own chaplains, physicians, and social activities. Gwilym Ambrose <sup>3</sup> has depicted a picture of the life of English traders at Aleppo between 1658 and 1756, where he depended mainly on the copybooks of factors' letters, which describe the problems of buying, shipping, transport, marketing, finance, as well as the social life of the English at Aleppo. <sup>4</sup> A more detailed and specialized study of English traders in Syria between 1744 and 1791 is given in Gharaybeh's doctoral thesis on this subject. <sup>5</sup>

The Levant Company enabled a rather large number of Englishmen to settle in the Near East, especially at Aleppo, for many years, and give some of the earliest accounts of the Levant in the English

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 663.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto.

<sup>3</sup> Gwilym Ambrose, *English Traders at Aleppo (1658-1756)*, in *The Economic History Review*, III, October 1931/32, pp. 246-67.

<sup>4</sup> According to Ambrose the letters are to be found in State Papers Foreign, Supplementary (S.P. 110), Levant Company, Aleppo, interspersed with the Company's records of the factory, written by factors in Aleppo to merchants in England between 1658 and 1756. Vols. xi to xxi, xxiii to xxv, xxix and xxxi and in Bundles 72 and 73.

<sup>5</sup> Gharaybeh, op. cit.

language. Other servants of the Company devoted their attention to archaeology and contributed considerably to the Hellenic revival. The efforts of the Company's physicians in studying the plague helped greatly "in the gradual diminution and eventual eradication of this terrible malady."<sup>1</sup> The chaplains who lived in Aleppo and other parts of Syria supplied the English reader continually with information about the Eastern Church and the Eastern sects. This section, therefore, deals with the most important English residents, who have left us accounts of their stay and occasional local journeys.

### 1. *Henry Maundrell* (1697)

#### *Route:*

*1st journey:* Aleppo (26 February 1697) – Ḥān-il-‘Asal – Urum – Kifrī – Ḥazzūn – Kiftīn – Harbanūz – Sahl-ir-Rūj – Tinnirīn – Šgūr – Bdāmeḥ – Šulfāṭia – Jableḥ – Bāniās – Nahr-il-Hussaṣn – Taṛtūs – the plain of ‘Akkār – crossed four rivers: il-Abraṣ, il-Kabīr, ‘Akkār and il-Bārid – Tripoli (9 March) – Ḳalamūn – Baṭrūn – Jubail – the river Nahr Ibrāhīm – the bay of Jūnieḥ – Nahr-il-Kalb and Nahr Baṣrūt – Baṣrūt (17 March) – Šuuaifāt – the river Dāmūr – Sidon – Šarafand – the river al-Ḳāsimijāḥ – Šūr – Ras-il-‘Ain – Nākūrah – Acre – the plain of Esdraelon – Nāblus – Ḥaḡḡārah – il-Lubbān – Sinjīl – Bireḥ – Rāmallah – Jerusalem (25 March) – the river Jordan – the Dead Sea – Bethlehem – Baḡt Jāla – Jerusalem – Ḥān-il-Laban – Kafr<sup>16</sup>Arab – Jinīn – Nazareth – Mount Ṭabūr – Acre – Sidon – Mašgara – the plain of Biḳā‘ – the river Liṭānī – Ḳar‘ūn – Jib Jinnīn – ‘Izzī – Dīmās – Dummar – Damaskus (27 April) – Šidnāja – ‘Ain-il-Ḥamra – Balbeck – Mount Lebanon – Tripoli – Ḳannūbīn – Tripoli – (along the same route) – Aleppo (20 May)

*2nd Journey:* (two years later, 17 April, 1699): Aleppo – Surbās – il-Bāb – Jarāblus – Bīr – Nizib – ‘Aintāb – Janbulad – Killis – I‘zāz – Aleppo (29 April)

Maundrell<sup>2</sup> was born in Compton Bassett, near Calne, Wiltshire, in 1665. He received his education at Exeter College, graduating B.A. 1685, M.A. 1688, and B.D., by decree, 1697. After being elected as Sarum fellow of his college on 30 June, 1686, and becoming full fellow on 28 June, 1697, he was ordained in the English Church and probably remained for some time at Oxford. Certain scandals and disputes in his college may have induced him to accept the curacy of Bromley in Kent, which he served from 1689 to 1695. On 20 December, 1695, Maundrell was elected, by plurality of votes, by the Levant Company as chaplain to their factory at Aleppo, an opportunity which his love for travel tempted him to seize at once. Accordingly, he left England and his best

<sup>1</sup> Bent, *op. cit.*, pp. 663-64.

<sup>2</sup> DNB; Boase's Exeter Coll. pp. 82-7, 213, 229; Foster's Alumni Oxon. Dunkin's Bromley, p. 27; Pearson's Levant Chaplains, pp. 18, 24-5, 58.

friends to find in Aleppo another English society with all the convenience he desired, for there was an English community of forty members, who lived in separate quarters, and attended Maundrell's daily service. In Maundrell's own words, "... There is not a society out of England, that for all good and desirable qualities, may be compared to this."

Maundrell died, presumably of fever, at Aleppo early in 1701.

His journey to Jerusalem at Easter, 1697 was published two years after his death as:

A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, at Easter, 1697, with Appendix. Oxford, 1703.<sup>1</sup>

To the third edition in 1714 was added:

... An Account of the Author's Journey to the Banks of the Euphrates at Beer, and to the Country of Mesopotamia.

The account of this journey won Maundrell wide recognition and fame as a traveller and authentic scholar. It is concise in contents, plain and attractive in style, and precise in its natural exposition of facts, all of which make it interesting to read even to-day. Maundrell's simplicity of utterance, avoidance of any display of erudition, and great curiosity about everything which he could learn by experiment and personal observation give him

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the mentioned first edition (A), there appeared the following editions:  
B. 2nd ed., Oxford, 1707.

C. 3rd ed., To which is ... added an account of the Author's Journey to the Banks of the Euphrates at Beer, and to the Country of Mesopotamia. Oxford, 1714.

D. 4th ed., Oxford, 1721.

E. 5th ed., Oxford, 1732.

F. 6th ed., Oxford, 1740.

G. 7th ed., Oxford, 1749.

H. 4th ed., Perth, 1800.

I. 10th ed., with a Journal from Grand Cairo to Mount Sinai and back again. Translated from a manuscript written by the Prefetto of Egypt by ... R. Clayton, Lord Bishop of Clogher. To which is added a faithful account of the Religion and Manners of the Mahometans, by J. Pitts. London, 1810.

*Dutch Translation:*

K. Reise van Aleppo naar Jerusalem ... Uit het Engelsch vertaalt. *Eusebius, Pamphili, etc.* Kanaän en d'omleggende Landen, etc, 1717.

*German Translation:*

L. Reise von Aleppo nach Jerusalem, um Ostern 1697 gemacht von H. M. (Paulus H. E. G.) Sammlung der Merkwürdigsten Reisen in den Orient, etc., Theil I, 1792.

*French Translation:*

M. Voyage d'Alep à Jérusalem (1697) par Henry Maundrell, Membre du Collège d'Exeter et Chapelin de la Facture Anglois à Alep. Traduit de l'Anglois. Utrecht, 1705.

I have copied from edition (I).

a special place among the travellers of the age. His critical mind and scientific approach reveal themselves best in his religious expositions and accounts of religious ceremonies during his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, in which he does not exclude the Bible from the necessity of historical interpretation, nor exempts it from textual criticism. Bishop Newton highly praises the book and its author, "whom it is a pleasure to quote as well as to read, and whose Journal from Aleppo to Jerusalem, though a little book, is yet worth a folio, and is so accurately and ingeniously written, that it might serve as a model for all writers of travel." <sup>1</sup>

### 2. *Anonymous (1725), editor: J. Green*

*Route:* Aleppo (6 April) – Ḥān Tūmān – Zarbel – Sarmin – Saraheh – Ma‘arrat-il-Nu‘man – Kafr Tab – Ḥama – Er-Rastan – Ḥumṣ – Ḥisya – Al-Braij – En-Nabk – Ḥān-il-‘Arus – Kutaifa – Damascus.

The writer of this journal is unknown to us, but as he made his journey to Damascus with a caravan of merchants, we presume that he was a resident of the English factory at Aleppo. The manuscript reached the hands of John Green, geographer, through a friend, and Green edited it in 1736, adding to it the description of Aleppo and Damascus, and the adjacent parts of Syria, with an account of the Maronites, which he translated from a treatise of the French mission in Lebanon. The account was published under the name:

A Journey from Aleppo to Damascus: with a Description of those two Capital Cities, and the neighbouring Parts of Syria. London, 1736 <sup>2</sup>.

The journal is of especial interest for the description of conditions of travel in Syria in the 18th century, with the exact mileage and rate of travel between the different stages from Aleppo to Damascus. It gives us very interesting information, the fullest of its kind among our travellers, about the caravanseras, or the special inns scattered on the caravan routes for the use of both traders and their animals of burden.

### 3. *Charles Thompson (1733)*

*Pretended route:* Constantinople (2nd of Sept.) – Smyrna – Tripoli Ihdin – Kannubin – the plain of Bika – Balbeck – Damascus – Tripoli – Kalamun – Jubail – Bairut – Sidon – Tyre – Acre – Satira – Sepharia – Nazareth – Mount Tabor – Acre – Kafar Arab – Sebasta – Nablus –

<sup>1</sup> Cox, op. cit., p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> It seems this is the only edition of the journey.

Han-il-Laban – Bir – Jerusalem – Jericho – the Jordan – the Dead Sea – Bethlehem – Ramla – Jaffa – Dumiat – Cairo – Suez – Tor – the Red Sea – Cairo – Rosetta – Alexandria – Marseille – London (12 April, 1735)

I have inserted this traveller among the residents in the Near East because of the great connection between his account and that of Maundrell, which throws much doubt on the reality of his existence. Referring to Thompson's journal, Cox writes: "This is a rare work, and was unknown to Watt, Lowndes, and Allibone.<sup>1</sup> In his preface the editor states that 'as soon as the Proposals for printing it were published, great enquiry was made concerning its Author, as is usual on such Occasions; and some Persons not meeting with the information they expected were pleased to insinuate, that this Name was fictitious, and that no such Gentleman ever travell'd or existed . . . For my part, I would willingly give the inquisitive Reader all the Satisfaction in my Power concerning the Author; but I am restrain'd from doing it by his dying Injunction.' The supposed author is not in the D.N.B., and the likelihood is—despite the editor's protestations—that he never existed."<sup>2</sup> In the preface to the edition of 1754, the editor, assuming that Thompson's authenticity and fame have been fully established, presents the reader with "a Part of the Travels of the late Mr. Charles Thompson, whose Learning and Abilities as a Scholar and a Gentleman are too well known to need any Encomium.' I am more inclined to believe that such a traveller never existed, or, if he did, had never actually visited the countries described in his journal. The motive for publishing such a book may be accounted for the popularity that Oriental travel books had won by the middle of the eighteenth century. Thompson's supposed travels were first published in 1744, under the long title of:

The Travels of the Late Charles Thompson, containing his Observations on France, Italy, Turkey in Europe, the Holy Land, Arabia, Egypt, and many other parts of the World, giving a particular and faithful Account of what is most remarkable in the Manners, Religion, Polity, Antiquities and Natural History of those Countries, with a curious Description of Jerusalem, as it now appears, and other Places mentioned in the Holy Scriptures: the whole forming a complete View of the ancient and modern State of great Part of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Published from the Author's original Manuscript, interspersed with the Remarks of several other Travellers, and illustrated with Historical, Geographical, and Miscellaneous Notes by the Editor. Reading, 1744.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Watt, R., *Bibliotheca Britannica* . . . etc., 1824; Lowndes, W. T., *The Bibliographer's Manual of English Literature*, 1834; Allibone, *Dictionary of English Literature*, London, 1881.

<sup>2</sup> Cox, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the given first edition (A), there appeared the following editions:

As far as the accuracy and judiciousness of the work are concerned there is very little to be said against it. But there is much to corroborate its plain plagiarism. Where Thompson, or his editor, failed to find sufficient accounts to copy from Maundrell, Shaw, Veryard or Pococke, he turned to the classical authors and the Holy Bible, to attempt at more interesting accounts of the history and foundation of the cities of Jerusalem, Damascus or Tyre. His Syrian and Palestinean journeys are plainly copied from Maundrell. It must have been a piece of extraordinary coincidence that both travellers arrived in Jerusalem at Easter, and underwent the same experiences, even to the finest details. Even the French consul of Sidon accompanied Thompson to Jerusalem, as he had accompanied Maundrell thirty six years before, and under almost the same circumstances. The similarity in the accounts of both travellers in certain passages is so exact, that one thinks Thompson to have copied Maundrell word for word. To give only one example, compare the following passages describing the monastery of Kannubin in Lebanon:

*Thompson, the 1754 edition vol. I, pp. 121-2*

"The situation of this monastery is not only delightful, but admirably adapted for a devoted retirement; for in the side of Libanus there is a very deep aperture running up into the mountain eighteen or twenty miles, which on both sides is high and steep, but cloth'd with trees and herbage from top to bottom, and everywhere water'd with little springs and rivulets, which fall down the rocks, and form delightful cascades. These streams, uniting at the bottom, make a full and rapid torrent, which adds to the pleasure of the place by its agreeable murmurs. Canobine is situated on the north side of this chasm, about half way up the mountains; and is but a mean structure, standing at the mouth of a cave, having a few rooms only which front outwards and enjoy the light of the sun, the rest being a subterraneous apartment . . .

"The valley of Canobine, one of the most pleasing recesses that can be imagined,

*Maundrell, the 1810 edition, pp. 192-3*

"... its situation is admirably adapted for retirement and devotion: for there is a very deep rupture in the side of Libanus, running at least seven hours travel directly up into the mountain. It is on both sides exceeding steep and high, cloathed with fragrant greens from top to bottom, and everywhere refreshed with fountains, falling down from the rocks in pleasant cascades. . . These streams, all uniting at the bottom make a full and rapid torrent, whose agreeable murmuring is heard all over the place, and adds no small pleasure to it. Canobine is seated on the north side of this chasm, on the steep of the mountain, at about the midway between the top and the bottom. It stands at the mouth of a great cave, having a few small rooms fronting outward, that enjoy the light of the sun; the rest are all under ground . . .

"The valley of Canobine was anciently (as it well deserves) very much resorted to for religious retirement. You see here

B. 2nd ed., *Travels through Turkey in Asia, the Holy Land, Arabia, Egypt and other parts of the world . . . With a curious description of Jerusalem as it now appears . . .* London, 1754.

C. 3rd. ed., London, 1767.

D. Another edition, Glasgow, 1798.

I have quoted from edition (B).

has been formerly much frequented by persons devoted to a religious life; for we still see here abundance of cells, hermitages, and monasteries: Nay, there is scarce any little rocky prominence on the side of the mountain, which has not some small structure upon it, serving anciently for the reception of monks and hermits, but most of them now are destitute of these pious inhabitants."

still hermitages, cells, monasteries, almost without number. There is not any little part of rock, that jets out upon the side of the mountain, but you generally see some little structure upon it, for the reception of monks and hermits; tho' few or none of them are now inhabited."

The Egyptian and Sinaitic parts of Thompson's journal are mostly copied from Shaw, Veryard and Pococke. His interests in Egypt and the Sinai Desert are identical with those of Shaw and Pococke. Like both these travellers, he attempts in the Sinai Peninsula to trace back the route of the Israelites on their return from Egypt to Palestine. Compare the following passages from Thompson and Shaw:

*Thompson, the 1754 edition, vol. II, p. 146*

"Upon opening one of the coffins, we found the head of the mummy full of a composition of the consistence, colour, and smell of pitch, but something more fragrant; which must, as Herodotus intimates, have been injected through the nostrils; to which end, as well as for the easier extraction of the brain, we found, upon examination, that the spectrum medium of the nose had been taken away. Having unfolded the bandage, that part of it which more immediately surrounded the body was quite rotten, and would not bear handling without falling to pieces, whereas a great number of yards of the exterior part appeared as strong as we can suppose it to have been the first day it was applied. Scarce any of the muscular parts were preserv'd, except upon the thighs; and even those, upon touching them, crumbled to powder."

*Shaw, the 1738 edition, p. 424*

"The composition that is found in the heads of the mummies, looks exactly like pitch, but is somewhat softer: the smell of it also is the same, though something more fragrant. In examining two of these mummies, by taking off the bandage, I found that the spectrum medium of the nose was taken away in them both; and that the skulls were somewhat thicker than ordinary. There were few or none of the muscular parts preserved, except upon the thighs, which crumbled to powder upon touching them. The like happened to that part of the bandage, which more immediately enveloped the body; notwithstanding that more than fifty yards of the exterior part, was, upon unfolding it, so strong to appearance, that it seemed to have been just taken from the loom. Yet even this, in a few days, one might easily rent to pieces."

Cox describes Thompson's work as a 'rare work', and it may arouse wonder to know that it enjoyed no little popularity, for the simple fact that it was edited four times in London, once in Dublin and once in Glasgow. Although the book is fictitious and lacks personal experiences and impressions, it remains interesting for its rather detailed historical accounts of the ancient civilisations that once flourished on the Syrian coast, in Palestine and in Egypt.



#### 4. *Alexander Drummond* (1745)

There is no hint anywhere about the early life of this traveller, who started his residence in the Near East as trader in Cyprus from 1745 to 1747, then became English vice-consul at Iskandarun (Alexandretta) from 1747, and later English consul at Aleppo from 1754-6. He died at Edinburgh on 9 August, 1769.<sup>1</sup> During his stay in Cyprus and Iskandarun in the years 1746-7, he made three journeys to Aleppo, and once made a journey with four other English residents of Aleppo to what he called "the desarts of Arabia"—somewhere around Aleppo, where he traced Maundrell's excursion in this area in 1699. Drummond set his observations during these excursions in a book in the form of letters, mostly addressed to his brother. The book was published under the title:

Travels through different Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece, and several parts of Asia as far as the Banks of the Euphrates. London, 1754.<sup>2</sup>

Drummond adds nothing new to what Maundrell and Pococke already left us, though he unfairly criticizes them in several places in his book.<sup>3</sup>

#### 5. *Alexander Russell* (1740-53)—*Patrick Russell* (1750-71)

Probably no book among our travel-accounts was received with more enthusiasm or celebrated more in scientific circles in England than Alexander Russell's:

The Natural History of Aleppo, and Parts adjacent, with the Climate, Inhabitants, and Diseases, particularly the Plague, the Methods used by Europeans for their Preservation, London 1756.<sup>4</sup>

The author and his brother Patrick were both physicians and naturalists and served the Levant Company as physicians at Aleppo, where they offered far-reaching services in the field of medicine and medical research, and their influence was not limited

<sup>1</sup> DNB; Anderson's *Scottish Nation* (Edinb. 1859-63), ii, 66.

<sup>2</sup> Only edition.

<sup>3</sup> Drummond, *Travels*, pp. 199, 242-8.

<sup>4</sup> In addition to the quoted first edition (A), there appeared the following editions: B. 2nd. ed., revised, enlarged and illustrated with notes by Patrick Russell. London, 1794. *Dutch Translation*:

C. *Nauwkeurige en natuurlyke Beschryving van de Stad Aleppo en van derzelver omme-landen . . . Uyt het Engels vertaald door Mr. L. T. Gronovius, Leyden, 1762.*

I have used edition (A).

to the small community at Aleppo, but was also widely recognized in England.

Alexander Russell <sup>1</sup> was born in Edinburgh about 1715, and was the third son by his second wife of John Russell of Braidshaw, Midlothian, a lawyer of repute. Patrick was John Russell's son by his third wife, and was born in 1727. Alexander was educated at the high school and University of Edinburgh. In 1734 he was one of the first members of the Medical Society of Edinburgh University. In 1740 he came to London, and in the same year went to Aleppo as physician to the English factory. He learnt to speak Arabic fluently, and acquired great influence with the Pasha and people of all creeds. His half-brother Patrick, after graduating M. D. in Edinburgh, joined him in 1750 at Aleppo. In 1753 he resigned, returning to England by way of Naples and Leghorn, in order to supplement his study of the plague which had started at Aleppo by visiting the lazarettos at those two ports. Among his scientific works was the description of the Syrian plant of scammony, and the native method of collecting it, which appeared in the first volume of the "Medical Observations", issued in 1755 by the Medical Society of London, which was founded in 1752 and to which Alexander belonged. He reached London in 1755, and the year after he published his "Natural History". In 1756 he was elected a F.R.S., and in the following year he was consulted by the privy council with reference to quarantine measures, owing to the outbreak of the plague at Lisbon. In 1760, having become a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians and a M.D. of Glasgow, he was appointed physician to St. Thomas's Hospital. In 1767 he contributed papers to the second and third volumes of the "Medical Observations". Alexander Russell died on 28 November 1768 at his house in Walbrook of a putrid fever.

Patrick succeeded his brother Alexander in 1753 as physician to the English factory at Aleppo. He was much respected there, and was granted by the Pasha the privilege of wearing a turban. From the date of the publication of Alexander's "Natural History" in 1756 until the latter's death in 1768, Patrick forwarded many emendations for the work. The epidemic of plague at Aleppo in

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<sup>1</sup> For Alexander and Patrick Russel see DNB.

1760, 1761, and 1762 afforded him exceptional opportunities for adding to his brother's studies of the disease, and in 1759 and 1768 he sent home accounts of destructive earthquakes in Syria, and of the method of inoculation practised there, which were published in the "Philosophical Transactions" for 1760 and 1768 respectively. In 1771 he left Aleppo, returning, as his brother had done before, through Italy and France, in order to examine the lazarettos. Reaching home in 1772, he settled in London, and in 1777 was elected F.R.S. Then he was appointed botanist to the East India Company in Carnatic from 1785 to 1789. In 1791 he published his famous "Treatise of Plague." He died in London, unmarried, in 1805.

Alexander Russell's *Natural History of Aleppo* is the only full reference to Aleppo and its surroundings in the eighteenth century. Besides the description and enumeration of all its animals, plants and flowers, there is a lot of interesting information on the city itself, its history and contemporary state, and on its inhabitants and their manners and life. As mentioned above, both Alexander and later on Patrick offered great services to mankind through their observation and laborious studies of the plague and its nature. Alexander's knowledge of Arabic, a rarity among our travellers, surely gave him better opportunities to understand the country and its people than others, and contributed to the good qualities of a scholarly work on Aleppo, which nobody else offered at this period.

### 6. Richard Tyron (1776)

*Route:* Iskandarūn (3 May 1776 with 20 Englishmen of the factory of Aleppo) – Tripoli – Ihdin – Bširri – Kānnūbīn – Tripoli – Jaffa – Ramleh – Jerusalem – Bethlehem – the Jordan and the Dead Sea – Bisan – Jericho – Jerusalem – Ramleh – Acre – Tripoli in Libya – Iskandarūn – Aleppo.

This traveller must have been a member of the English community of traders at Aleppo. He made his pilgrimage to Jerusalem with twenty Englishmen of the factory of Aleppo. There is nothing new or particular in his brief account, mainly describing Palestine and the Holy Places, and not exceeding 24 pages. It appeared as:

Travels from Aleppo to the City of Jerusalem, and through the most remarkable parts of the Holy Land, in 1776: wherein are described Mount Lebanon, Jerusalem, and all the curiosities in and about that once famous city; the River Jordan, its rise and course; the Valley of Salt, and Lake of Sodom, Mount Olivet, Mount Sinai, Mount

Horeb, Mount Hermon, Mount Gilboa, and the Rock Meribah . . . with a minute description of most of the places so often mentioned in Scripture. . . a description of Bethlehem, and all its ancient Curiosities; with a description of Molach, & c. By Richard Tyron, Esq. an English Gentleman. Glasgow, 1790.<sup>1</sup>

While there were English residents of the Levant Company at Aleppo, there were also English residents in Egypt. Alexandria was one of the centres of the Levant Company on the Mediterranean<sup>2</sup>, and Cairo was for a considerable time part of the trade monopoly of the East India Company.<sup>3</sup> There was a time, exactly in 1775, when the same person acted as agent to the Levant and East India Companies simultaneously in Cairo.<sup>4</sup> This agent, George Baldwin, will be discussed among our travellers in a later section in this study. Before we have done with this section, therefore, we shall deal with two further residents who settled for some time in Egypt.

### 7. *S. Lusignan* (1771)

The title of the work alone points to its importance and value, as it deals with three momentous years of violence and unrest in Egypt and Syria—a short period that remains remarkable during the whole languid century:

History of the Revolt of Ali Bey against the Ottoman Porte, including an Account of the form of Government of Egypt; together with a Description of Grand Cairo, and of several celebrated places in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria; also the Journal of a Gentleman who travelled from Aleppo to Bassora, by S. L., London, 1783.<sup>5</sup>

The work, in my opinion, is of a considerable historical value, owing to the fact that its author was an eye-witness of the events that accompanied the rise and fall of an extremely ambitious Mameluke. He joined the retinue of Ali Bey, the dictator of Egypt, when the latter was at the top of his power, when he was defying the Ottoman Empire, and conspiring with Russia against its sway. Lusignan, like all the members of Ali Bey's retinue, forsook his

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the given edition (C), there appeared the following editions before it:  
A. Glasgow, 1785.

B. Another edition, Glasgow, (1800?)

I have used edition (C).

<sup>2</sup> J. Theodore Bent, *op. cit.*, p. 663.

<sup>3</sup> H. L. Hoskins, *The Overland Route to India in the Eighteenth Century*, in *History*, vol. ix, No. 33, April, 1924, p. 307.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 305.

<sup>5</sup> Only edition.

master at the last moment, when the Bey was sick and beaten, and meeting his fate in a heroic delirium.

I find it strange that, while Volney<sup>1</sup> is continually quoted by modern historians of this period,<sup>2</sup> no reference is made to Lusignan's work, although it appeared four years before Volney's famous work. Volney's impersonal exactness and authenticity no doubt stand all scrutinies, but nevertheless Lusignan's work might justly claim more attention than has been given to it, if only for its originality and first-hand information. In contrast to Volney, Lusignan is not very exact in the dates which he gives in his account, especially those before 1770. He also confuses the names of the Pashas and Beys of Egypt before Ali Bey. This may be due to the fact that he depended in that case partly on hearsay, and partly on his memory which must have betrayed him after ten years of the related episodes. He is more exact and informative on the period in which he was an eye-witness and accomplice in Ali Bey's plans from 1771 to 1773.

Although Lusignan is not of an English origin, he is discussed here because his account originally appeared in English. There is no reference to his biography except in the preface to his work. In 1746 his eldest brother, to avoid death or change of religion, took his ten-years-old brother, S. Lusignan, and, leaving Greece, their native country, both went to Dumiāt. They had an uncle in Cairo in the service of Muhammad Rageb, then Pasha of Cairo. The younger Lusignan was sent to this uncle, and thus came into intimate acquaintance with Ali Bey at that early age. When the Pasha Muhammad Raged was deposed and had to return to Turkey, Lusignan and his uncle accompanied him to Constantinople, where L. led a mercantile life. On a business journey to Dumiāt, he made the acquaintance of the "under-commissioner" of the customs, Mu'allim Michael Farḥa, a favourite of Ali Bey. In 1769 Lusignan was in Europe, and received an order from Ali Bey himself desiring him to endeavour to settle some affairs for him in his travels, and go to Cairo as soon as possible, because he had some service to

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<sup>1</sup> Constantine Francois Chasseboeuf, Comte de Volney, *Voyage en Syrie et en Egypte, pendant les années 1783, 1784, et 1785*. Paris, 1787.

<sup>2</sup> See: H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, vol. I, part I, *passim*.

employ him with. In 1771 Lusignan went to Cairo, where Mu'allim Farḥa introduced him to Ali Bey, and since that time he remained in his service till his defeat in 1773.<sup>1</sup>

### 8. *John Antes* (1770-1782)

Antes was a missionary in Egypt, and resided from 1770 to 1782 in Cairo, a period which enabled him to establish good relations with the natives and the leading European merchants there.

There is no information about Antes's early life, and all that we know about him is drawn directly from his book:

Observations on the Manners and Customs of the Egyptians; the Overflowing of the Nile and its Effects; with Remarks on the Plague and other subjects. Written during a Residence of twelve years in Cairo and its vicinity. London, 1800.<sup>2</sup>

He was a citizen of Fulnec, in Yorkshire; his father had been 'naturalized and instructed with offices in the King's service, in America.' He was educated and spent most of his time in foreign countries. From his infancy he had a strong interest in geography. "But as my situation, and other circumstances, did not permit me to extend it as I could from private instruction, or from books . . . this did not in the least damp my desire to come, as much as possible, to the bottom of everything that presented itself to my view, or of which I had any information."<sup>3</sup> He knew James Bruce very well, and after the latter's return from his Abyssinian expedition, Antes was in Cairo, and 'had the pleasure of his company for three months almost every day.'<sup>4</sup>

His book is not an itinerary, or a journal, but is mainly of a topographical nature. His observations were originally written in German, but he translated them into English and sent them on the 30th of April, 1788, to Daines Barrington, lawyer, antiquarian and naturalist, who held then the post of commissary-general of the British stores at Gibraltar. In addition to the letter addressed to Barrington, the book is preceded by another letter to Captain Blankett, of the British navy, who, in 1789, was sent as senior officer to the Red Sea, where he commanded during the subsequent operations in Egypt. The letter contains information requested

<sup>1</sup> Preface to Lusignan's work.

<sup>2</sup> Only edition.

<sup>3</sup> p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> p. 17.

by Captain Barrington concerning the different caravans which go from Egypt to the interior parts of Africa, together with instructions to be followed during a caravan journey, and the extent of the 'Moors's enmity to Christians and how to avoid it'. This reveals the reliance of a responsible navy officer on Antes's information as an eye-witness on the spot.

While reading Antes's work, you feel you have before you a man who resided long enough in the country, learned its language and tried to understand its system of government, in spite of the cruelties and shortcomings of such a system. Before he wrote his book, Antes had read the works of a host of travellers: Savary, Volney, Pococke, Norden, Niebuhr, Bruce, Alexander Russell, Wansleb and Lobo. He recommends only Pococke, Norden and Niebuhr as the ones 'who have given very good information', and were in his opinion, considerably copied by Savary and Volney.<sup>1</sup> He criticizes the general attitude of travellers who come to Egypt, and, ignorant of the language, depend mainly on hearsay and confine their contacts to Greeks or Europeans residing in Egypt. In this respect he even includes Bruce.<sup>2</sup> Antes's Book is divided into several sections, dealing with the plague in Egypt, the Nile and its flood, the climate of Egypt, the rise of vapours and their change of state into rain, examples of the Mameluke system of government, and finally the position of Egypt as a commercial centre.

Antes avoids verbosity and repetition, and his style invites interest, especially in his narrative passages.<sup>3</sup> He displays an objective and critical mind, which is not affected by occasional happenings or biased by prejudice. One may feel a relatively friendly tone in his comments on Egypt, probably bred by his long residence and associations in the country.

### C. THE DESERT ROUTE TO INDIA <sup>4</sup>

Of the three great routes which have been the main links between Europe and Asia—namely, the Red Sea, the Euphrates Valley

<sup>1</sup> pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 14-15, 19 f.

<sup>3</sup> His narrative of his journey from Cyprus to Egypt, pp. 55 ff, and his tales of the feats of the dervishes, pp. 15 ff.

<sup>4</sup> The journals of Beawes, Roberts, Plaisted and Carmichael are edited by Douglas Carruthers, in *The Desert Route to India*, published by the Hakluyt Society, second series,

and the Caspian, the Euphrates, denominated as the Great Desert Route, is the most ancient and most direct. This golden road of Indo-Syrian trade was the scene of great struggle and wars, for laying hands on it meant getting possession of the pivot between Asia and Europe. This area was the secret of the great commercial success of the Phoenicians who conveyed Eastern merchandise across it and distributed it in Egypt, Greece and Rome.<sup>1</sup> The Arab conquest did not seriously interrupt this trade, and in the meantime both Venice and Genoa became masters of the Mediterranean through their Eastern trade by the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. But as the Mongol expansion had endangered the security of European pilgrimage to Jerusalem, it also severed the land routes, which were completely closed as the Ottoman Empire came into existence and strangled all Indo-European intercourse.<sup>2</sup> The rapidly rising sea-powers of the West about the end of the 15th century looked for a sea-route to the Orient. The journeys and marine adventures of the 16th century were all attempted with one object in view—to find the shortest way to the wealth of the Orient. The Portuguese won the upper hand, and were the first to reopen the road to the East. It became their policy to block the old routes, and hinder all trade but theirs. They cut off all connections with the Mediterranean by the Gulf or the Red Sea.<sup>3</sup> The establishment of the Levant Company in 1583, though failing to open up direct overland trade with the Orient, forced the British to seek a sea path, and, thus, indirectly helped to establish the East India Company which played a decisive rôle in the history of Anglo-Indian relations. As British power grew and Portuguese and Dutch declined, the old land route gradually revived, until, in 1750, the

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No. LXIII, 1929. In this section of my dissertation I owe much to Carruther's thorough work that I have almost very little to claim. His introduction, extending over 35 pages, is a very important and comprehensive study of the history of the Great Desert Route between the eastern part of the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Basra, since the dawn of civilization until its decline round the end of the 18th century, together with a survey of the different European travellers who crossed it for different purposes. Carruthers exerted great effort in editing these four journals with corrections, abundant footnotes, valuable comments, and rich biography. His work includes, in addition, several plates extracted from different sources showing: The city of Aleppo, Meshed Ali (Najaf), Ukhaidir, Approach to Antioch from Aleppo, Carmichael's panoramic sketches, Qaşūr il Ikhwān, and finally, a map of Syria and Mesopotamia, illustrating the route crossed by the four travellers.

<sup>1</sup> Carruthers, *op. cit.*, p. xi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xiii-xiv.



Aleppo-Basra track—the famous Indo-Syrian caravan route of earliest days—came back into use as the quickest route to India, and enjoyed a brief period of comparative prosperity. In the latter half of the 18th century quite a number of Englishmen, chiefly East India Company officials going to or returning from India, used this route as a short cut from the Mediterranean ports to the Indian seas, preferring the tedious desert journey, from Aleppo to Baghdad or Basra, to the long sea passage round the Cape, or the more hazardous way of the Red Sea and Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

*The early Europeans on the Desert Route:*

The first European to cross the desert from Aleppo to Basra and to leave a record of his journey was the Portuguese Antonio Tenreiro who made his journey in 1523, and returned the same way in 1528 carrying important despatches from the governor of Ormuz to Lisbon. The next traveller was a Venetian, Caesar Frederick, who in 1563 went through Aleppo to Bir (Birejik), and down the Euphrates to Falluja, thence to Baghdad, Basra, Ormuz and India. Bernardina forty years later met a Basra-bound caravan containing no less than nine Venetians. In 1565 another party of Portuguese, led by Antonio Teixeira, made the return journey from Basra to Babylonia by the Euphrates, and thence by riding animals to the "Great Sea".<sup>2</sup>

With the turn of the 17th century, we come upon the first detailed itineraries of the desert route. Pedro Teixeira on his return from India to Italy in 1604-5, passed by way of Basra, Baghdad, Āna and Aleppo. His narrative is one of the fullest and most interesting of all those that have been left us by the overland travellers.<sup>3</sup> Gasper the Bernardino crossed the desert from Meshed Ali (Najaf) to Aleppo in 1606-7. Pierro della Valle, who travelled much in Turkey, Persia, and India between 1615 and 1625, passed twice across the desert, going from Aleppo to Baghdad in 1616, and from Basra to Aleppo in 1625. In 1663, the Jesuit father Manuel Godinho, a Portuguese missionary, came up the Gulf to Basra;

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, pp. xi and xv.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. xvi-xvii.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, pp. xix-xxi.

here waiting neither for boat to carry him up stream to Baghdad, nor for caravan protection during the desert crossing, he pushed on with small and insufficient escorts by way of Meshed Ali, Baghdad, 'Ana, Ṭaybih and Aleppo to the Mediterranean seaboard. Tavernier, the Parisian jewel merchant, went by the desert from Baghdad to Aleppo in 1632 and from Aleppo direct to Basra in 1638.<sup>1</sup>

*The early Englishmen on the Route:*

As the first Englishman appeared on the scene in the person of John Newberry, who passed through Tripoli and Aleppo, and made the journey down the Euphrates to the Gulf in 1580, the story of the Overland route became largely occupied with the exploits of the first agents and emissaries of the Levant Company. In 1583 nine or ten English merchants of the Levant Company undertook a journey from London to India allured by the commercial possibilities of the East. They were John Newberry, Ralph Fitch, John Eldred, and six or seven more, including William Leeds and James Storie. On their way to India, they crossed from the Mediterranean to the Gulf, passing through Tripoli, Aleppo, Bir, Baghdad, Basra, and Hormuz. In 1584 Eldred returned, crossing the desert from Hit to Aleppo; Fitch did not return until 1590-1, and then took the northern track via Mosul, Urfa, and Bir.<sup>2</sup> This initial venture by merchants of the Levant Company was of great importance in the history of British domination in the East. For the first time in their history, the British reached India and the East Indies through Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf. The observations recorded by Fitch, Newberry, and Eldred concerning the regions they crossed remain of lasting interest. In 1599 Sir Anthony Shirley made the same journey down the Euphrates, on his way to the court of Shah Abbas.<sup>3</sup> John Mildenhall, a merchant of London, sent to further trade interests at the Court of the Great Mogul, passed the same way the following year. He was accompanied by John Cartwright, who wrote an account of their wanderings.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, pp. xxi-xxii.

<sup>2</sup> Zaki Saleh, op. cit., pp. 27-28; Arnold T. Wilson, op. cit., pp. 133-4; Hakluyt, op. cit., vols. v. and vi; Purchas, vol. viii, p. 451, and vol. x, chap. vi; W. Foster, *Early Travels in India, 1583-1619*, London, 1921.

<sup>3</sup> Wilson, op. cit., pp. 128 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Carruthers, op. cit., p. xix; Purchas, vol. viii, pp. 382 and 482.

When, in the middle of the 18th century, travellers again appeared on the scene, they were almost all of British nationality, and most of them were in the service of the East India Company. By that time all attempts to find an alternative route to the East by way of the Arctic seas round Siberia, or by the North West passage round America, had failed. The idea of opening a back door into India and Cathay by way of Russia and Central Asia had been given up. The sea route was long and dangerous. The short cut by the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf alone presented itself as a possible medium for speedy contact with India.<sup>1</sup>

The travellers that will be dealt with in this section are typical of a great age in the annals of British rule in India. In Carruther's own words: "The middle of the eighteenth century was epochmaking in that the early struggles of the East India Company culminated in complete triumph—a trading venture grew into an empire."<sup>2</sup> Those travellers were the pioneers of this triumph, and the East India Company could not have survived that long period of power, had it not relied greatly on the ventures and bold journeys of those messengers and travellers. Let us now examine them and their journals.

### I. *William Beawes (1745)*

*Route:* Aleppo (5 August 1745) – Şîra – El Jabbûl – Kuşûr el İhwan – the watering Jubb el Ganam – the Euphrates – Uqlat Haurân – the watering 'Ain el Arnab – Qubaisa – Şîra – Uḥaiḍir – Najaf – Qasr Ruḥaima – Raḥba – Quwaybda – Zubair – Başra (4 Sept.)

Beawes was the first representative of this new power which had established itself in India to use and record the short cut to England; the first, indeed, of a series of British travellers who came to use the overland desert route as a short passage to, and from, the newly acquired possessions in the East. The year of Beawes' journey —1745—was also a landmark in the chronicles of the desert route, for it came back into favour after being more or less out of use for nearly a century since Tavernier's journey in 1632.

Beawes was a merchant belonging to the Levant Company at Aleppo. It seems that he undertook a business journey, carrying merchandise to Başra and thence to India. His narrative was first printed by Carruthers as:

<sup>1</sup> Carruthers, p. xxii.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. xxiii.

*Narrative of a Journey from Aleppo to Basra in 1745.*<sup>1</sup>

Carruthers learned about it only from a copy preserved among the Orme MSS in the India Office Library, including the materials collected by Robert Orme in the course of his historical investigations, and bequeathed by him to the library of the East India House.<sup>2</sup>

Beawes meant his journal to be a kind of travel-guide, useful for contemporary travellers crossing the Syrian desert route on their way to India. Thus he opens his diary with the mention of the four different routes between Aleppo and Basra, considering their advantages and disadvantages. Apart from his interesting description of the caravan journey itself, with all the necessary preparations, associations and accompaniments, his diary is of special value for the description of Najaf and the tomb of 'Ali, which he was fortunate enough to visit safely without being murdered, contrary to all expectations. He shows also particular interest in watching the Bedouin Arabs and studying their character closely, which affords us with notable comments and observations that will be discussed in another place in this dissertation.

2. *Gaylard Roberts (1748)*

Roberts's journal was edited for the first time by Carruthers, who found it also among the Orme MSS (India Office Library) inserted in the same volume with the narrative of Beawes.<sup>3</sup>

Almost nothing is known about Roberts except that he was among the European inhabitant of Madras (1744-6), not belonging to the East India Company's service, but included among the "supercargoes and pursers" carrying on private trade. Roberts's journey between Basra and Aleppo was part of his way with his son back to England.

He set out from Basra in June 11, 1748, and arrived in Aleppo in July 16, after 36 days. There is no statement of the stations he crossed during his desert passage. This negligence in stating the route he attributes to the excessive heat during the first days, and to the futility of describing places he had not had sufficient time to visit and examine closely. He only mentions passing by a

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, pp. 43-44.

palace about midway between Baṣra and Aleppo, which is “the most solid and grand . . . of any in the world”. Probably he means Uḥaiḍir. He also describes Palmyra, giving the impression of having seen it from a distance. But we learn from Plaisted’s journal that the latter had the same servant who served Roberts, and that he assured Plaisted that his former master Roberts had gone no further than Ṭaybih.<sup>1</sup>

The journal is a letter sent to a merchant, probably in Bengal, Roberts writes that the desert route between Baṣra and Aleppo is of use only if the merchant coming from India manages to arrive in Baṣra before the departure of the caravan, which leaves at a certain date. Then the merchant can accompany it, and at the same time employ his money in respondentia. The remaining part of the letter comprises other pieces of advice necessary for an unexperienced traveller desiring to cross the desert.

### 3. *Bartholomew Plaisted* (1750)

*Route*: Calcutta (30 Nov. 1749) – Ceylon – Bandar ‘Abbās – Baṣra (20 April 1750) – Zubair – Quwaibda – Ḥuniga – Ġurāra – Gudary – Alaṭla<sup>2</sup> – Ḥufnie<sup>3</sup> – Uḥaiḍir – Rās el ‘Ain – Qaṣr Ṭumail – Husur Tahuṣa<sup>4</sup> – Ṭaybih – Ḥiqla – El Ġubṭin – El Mallūḥa – Šfira – Aleppo (23 July) – Bailān – Iskandarūn (10 Aug.) – Cyprus – Rhodes – Sardinia – Marseille – Lyons – Paris – Boulogne – Dover – London (24 Nov.)

There is no information about Plaisted’s early life before the end of 1740, when he was permitted by the Court of Directors of the East India Company “to get his livelihood in the seafaring way” in Bengal.<sup>5</sup> All that we know about him after this date is gathered from the Company’s records. He must have had some experience in navigation, and hoped to obtain the command of a vessel engaged in the local trade permitted to the Company’s servants. In 1747 he declared that he had been at Genoa, Leghorn, Messina, etc., which implies that he had already sailed in the

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 85, and footnote (1), p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Carruthers does not identify Alaṭla. However, on the Internationale Weltkarte (Irak, 1: 1,000,000) there is a site, Aṭia, on the northwestern corner of Baḥr Najaf, which may be the one in question, corruptly written by Plaisted.

<sup>3</sup> This is not located on Carruthers’s map. On the map (Irak, 1: 1,000,000), op. cit., there are two places, Hafnat al Khurr, SW of Ṭuṭṭuqāna, and Al Hafna, on Wādī Ubayidh, SW of Uḥaiḍir.

<sup>4</sup> Husur Tahuṣa is not identified by Carruthers. There is Mazār Taghusha, SW of Jubba, between Wādī Haurān and Wādī Ṭuraif, Irak, 1: 1,000,000.

<sup>5</sup> Carruthers, op. cit., pp. 51-56.

Mediterranean more than once. In 1748 he asserted that he was "regularly brought up and educated in fortification and gunnery", which reveals his having had some military training including surveying.

In July 1742, he assisted in surveying Calcutta to give it a better state of defence. In July 1745, the regular surveyor died, and Plaisted, who was then captain and supercargo of a vessel named Kent, was appointed to the post. But discovering that his earnings at sea exceeded those of the new post, he resigned and took command of the Governor's (John Forster) vessel, the *Northesk*. Just before setting to sail in September 1746, news arrived of the capture of Madras by the French, and it was decided that Calcutta should be fortified to resist any hostile attack. Plaisted accordingly, was persuaded to stay on shore as engineer and surveyor. In February 1747, he produced a plan for strengthening Fort William, which, had it been followed, would have prevented the Black Hole tragedy in 1756.<sup>1</sup> But because it demanded a sacrifice of private interests, it was rejected in favour of another much more costly and of very little effect. This led to a dispute which was more enflamed by Plaisted's quarrelsome nature and sharp tongue, so that the hostilities thus engendered cost him his post in 1748, in a very irritating manner. His opponents persuaded the Council to ignore him and appoint another man in his place, claiming that he had never been regularly appointed. But Plaisted could not endure that injustice and, therefore, protested indignantly to the new Governor that he would prosecute the case to the Directors in England. Receiving no attention or reinstatement, permission to return to England was granted him on his request on the 27th of September, 1749, and the result was his desert passage with which we are now concerned.

Once in London, it was not difficult for Plaisted to convince the Directors of the bad treatment he had received, and of the other abuses prevalent in Calcutta. Accordingly, he was sent back to Bengal early in 1752 with the recommendation of the Directors as being "an honest, capable man", and a letter was sent censuring his dismissal. But as they had already sent a man to India as

<sup>1</sup> For Fort William see C. R. Wilson's *Old Fort William*, Indian Records Series, 1906. For Black Hole, see *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, vol. iv, pp. 142, 144 and 156.

Engineer-General, Plaisted's immediate reinstatement in his old post was not possible, so the Bengal Council procured him a post in another station, though not as a covenanted servant.

However, on Plaisted's arrival in Bengal, the death of the newly-appointed Engineer-General opened the way for his reinstatement as Engineer and Surveyor, which post he held in September, 1752. Nevertheless, his hot temper at once caused him fresh trouble. A scuffle with a Mr. William MacGwire caused him a wound that kept him in bed for several months. MacGwire was tried, and pleaded guilty, and was only reprimanded and fined, whereas Plaisted was blamed for the uproar, and the Council declared for the Directors in London that the assailant had acted under extreme provocation.

Plaisted could not keep his post more than one year, because of the appointment of Colonel Scott by the Directors as Engineer-General of all their India settlements. Plaisted, however, was not entirely ignored, for in January 1754, instructions were sent that he was to succeed to the post of Master Attendant at Calcutta on the next vacancy. He had to wait until November, 1755 to be placed in that office. But three weeks later, he was suspended from his post for insubordination: the Council claimed that he had forwarded to them for transmission to the Directors two violently worded complaints of the treatment he had received. He was permitted again to leave for England, which he reached in November, 1756. MacGwire, likewise, proceeded to England to defend himself against Plaisted's charges, which he did so successfully, that in March, 1757, he was permitted to return to Bengal, whereas Plaisted was deprived of such a privilege because of his turbulent temper.

With this defeat, Plaisted turned to publishing the account of his overland journey, the income of which possibly answered his immediate demands. It appeared under the title:

A Journal from Calcutta in Bengal by Sea, to Busserah, from thence through the Great Desert to Aleppo; and from thence to Marseilles, and through France to England, in the Year 1750. London, 1757.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the quoted first edition (A), there appeared the following ones:

- B. A Journal from Calcutta, by Sea, to Busserah, from thence across the Great Desert to Aleppo, and from thence to Marseilles, and thro' France to England, in the year 1750, to which are added, Capt. Elliot's Directions for passing over the Little Desert, from Busserah, by the way of Bagdad, Orfa and Aleppo. London, 1758.

In the meantime, Plaisted persevered in his applications to the Directors, using all methods to win their consent, until finally in the spring of 1758, they relented and sent him back once more to Calcutta as Surveyor of Works. His past experience taught him now how to keep on good terms with his superiors, and, afterwards, not a single spot tinted his relations with them. In October, 1761, the London Office ordered his transfer to the Bombay establishment, for which reason he forwarded his resignation of his Calcutta post. But as the Bengal Council was highly interested in his survey services in Chittagong, they detained him and asked the Directors for permission to keep him there and cancel his transfer. With no objection from London, Plaisted remained in Bengal as Surveyor and Assistant Engineer, and enjoyed at the same time the rank and emoluments of a factor. But the Directors had stipulated that he should not rise any higher in the covenanted service; so when the Bengal government in May 1765 ignored this stipulation, and raised him to the rank and emoluments of a member of Council, London orders arrived cancelling the promotion. While engaged all this time in survey work in Chittagong, he was recalled to undertake similar work in Burdwan. By now he had won the high favour of the Council, who in the following March wrote to the Directors, recommending him to their favourable notice. In July, 1767, he was ordered to Lakhipur on a survey. There, he fell ill, and returned to Calcutta, where he died on 27 October, 1767.

The section dealing with the desert route in Plaisted's journal is the one that interests us here. It is of some value for the information it gives about Baṣra, its trade and the life and activities of the Dimmis (non-moslems) in it. Plaisted is the first to describe Ṭaybiḥ, but, like Beawes before him, he ignores Uḥaidir, not saying a single word on it. The description of those impressive ruins was to be given first by a later traveller, Carmichael, who will be discussed later.

Another interesting point in Plaisted's account of the route is the part concerning the desert and the caravan journey, where much observation is given to the nature of the soil, the desert shrubs, and the details of the caravan passage itself. The unfriendly

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C. The extract in Carruthers's work, *op. cit.*

I have used edition (C).



circumstances of this journey occasion him to pass a much less favourable verdict on the Arabs and the Bedouin caravaniers than Beawes.

#### 4. *Eliot Eliot* (1750)

All that we know about Captain Eliot is Plaisted's allusion to him in his preface, as "a gentleman I well knew". Probably he was also a servant of the East India Company. His journal is of some interest, being the only one relating the Mosul route to Aleppo. It is mainly directions to guide other travellers.

He mentions all the necessary utensils, arms and preparations one should be furnished with for this journey. As the best measures for a safe passage, he recommends acquiring a passport from the Pasha of Baṣra, and avoiding carrying too much furniture or money. He also describes a river journey from Baghdad down to Baṣra, passing through 'Amārā, where there is a "fort constructed of burnt bricks" then to Satarat,<sup>1</sup> Mansury, Mazar,<sup>2</sup> and finally to Qurna, which he describes with its 10,000 janissaries and 8 or 10 well armed galleys "to keep the adjacent country in awe".

Once you arrive in Baghdad after leaving Baṣra, and proceed to Mosul, "you will meet villages on the road to lodge in from stage to stage. But for the apartments, they will be of little use, except to defend you from the weather; for there is no furniture, and it will be a rarity to find so much as a little stool."<sup>3</sup> In Kirkuk it was usual to rest a day or two and replenish provisions for four days until Mosul was reached. In Mosul, one either waited for a caravan to Aleppo, or hired horses with a convoy. The next station after Mosul was Nişibīn, and the space between them is a dry desert with brackish water. In Nişibīn, the caravan halted for customs inspection; and then proceeded to Khoja Hissar where a certain tax, imposed by the Grand Signor on all his Christian and Jewish subjects, was collected by "a set of very impertinent people, who,

<sup>1</sup> Not identified.

<sup>2</sup> Carruthers does not identify Mazar. There is the site of Al Muzaira just north of Al Qurna. See the map of the world 1: 1,000,000, (GSGS 4646 Sheet NH-38 Edition 8). The same site is called Al-Madhar, dating to the Islamic period, north of Qurna, and SE of Qal'at Ṣaliḥ. See Map of Ancient Sites of Iraq issued by the Directorate General of Antiquities, Bagdad, 1954.

<sup>3</sup> Carruthers, op. cit., p. 122.

in hope of squeezing somewhat out of the Europeans, often molest them . . . These sort of molestations can hardly be avoided in these places but when you come to a town of any note you will meet with nothing but civility and hospitality. Therefore in the lesser towns the best way will be to put on big looks, and to assume the air of a man of consequence; for these people are easily imposed upon, and that will command respect”.

In more than one place, Eliot underestimates and disregards the danger of bedouin raids or desert attacks by robbers, relating such events to the cowardice of the travellers and not to the danger of the attackers. Therefore in the space between Mārdin and Urfa, the next station, which is full of robbers and thieves, “there a great many more frightened than hurt”.

Once in Aleppo, Eliot finally mentions the two possibilities of travelling to England: either from Iskandarūm, or from Latakia, and in both cases the traveller passes by Cyprus.

### 5. John Carmichael (1751)

*Route:* Aleppo (October 21, 1751) – Tell Aran <sup>1</sup> – Ain Dahab – Sfira – Jabbūl – Hiqla – Taybih – Quşūr el Iḥwān – Jubḥ el Ganam – Baṭn Suāb – Baṭn Farda <sup>2</sup> – Tāq Abu Jāmūs – Uglat Ḥaurān <sup>3</sup> – Ain el Arnab in the bed of Wādī Ṭuraif – Qubaisa – Ard el Muḥammadi <sup>4</sup> – Ṭumail – Ras el‘Ain – Uḥaiḍir – Ṭuṭuṭāna – Ruḥaima – Wādī Hisb – Minārat el Qurūn – Umm il Hāshem <sup>5</sup> – Baṭn Quşair – Baṭn Arnaba – Ḥunaiga – Baṭn Shagra – Shabda – Quwaibda – Zubair – Baṣra (10 December)

<sup>1</sup> Not located on Carruthers's map. It is situated NE of Sfira, between Tell Hassel and ‘Aziziya. See the map *Levant*, 1 : 200,000 (Ffle NJ-37-11) issued by the Bureau Topographique des Troupes Françaises du Levant, Beyrouth.

<sup>2</sup> Not to be found on modern maps. Le Strange writes about it: “The harbour of Al-Furdah, called Furdah Nu'm for distinction, lay due west of ‘Ānah on the Euphrates, half way of Karkisia, and probably marked the eastern bend of the Euphrates, but it is now no longer to be found on the map. This was an important station where the highway bifurcated, to the left-hand one road going direct across the desert by way of Rusafah to Rakkah, while the right-hand road kept upstream along the river bank.” G. Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, Cambridge, 1905, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> Carruthers writes: “This wādī is in fact the most important affluent of the Euphrates from the Syrian Desert; it has a length of at least 230 miles.” op. cit., footnote (3), p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> Not located on Carruthers's map. There is Wādī Muḥammadi, south of Qubaisa and, north of Abu Jir. See Internationale Weltkarte, (Irak: 1: 1,000,000).

<sup>5</sup> Not identified by Carruthers. He states that Chesney, in his *Expeditions for the Survey of the Rivers Euphrates and Tigris in 1835-37*, London, 1850, refers to a Well Haban in the same district. However, there are two sites east of Darb Zubaida, very near to one another, with the name of Qulūb Umm il Hāshim. The northern one is approximately 44° 20', long., 31° 14' lat. A little to the south there is a Wādī Rijlat Hadhan, of which Chisney's Haban may be a corruption. See Internationale Weltkarte, (Irak, 1: 1,000,000).

Carmichael's journal first appeared as an appendix to the second edition (London, 1772) of *A Voyage to the East Indies*, by John Henry Grose, under the title of:

*Narrative of a Journey from Aleppo to Basra in 1751.*<sup>1</sup>

Of Carmichael, Grose writes in his preliminary 'advertisement': "... He was in service of the East India Company at Bombay, where having some disputes with the Governor and Council, he came over to England in order to lay his complaints before the Court of Directors, leaving his affairs in India unsettled. His conduct was so much disapproved that, instead of meeting with redress, he was dismissed from the service; and on his application for leave to go back, in order to settle his affairs, he was refused a passage on board any of the Company's ships. This occasioned him to take the journey over the desert. On his arrival in India, he entered into the service of one of the country powers; and after meeting with many adventures and experiencing great vicissitudes of fortune, he at last died in distress at Surat."<sup>2</sup>

On the 8th of June, 1750, John Carmichael, late Gunner at Anjengo, complained to the Directors of the East India Company in London of injuries inflicted upon him at that place and Bombay, praying that he might be compensated and sent out again as a covenanted servant. The petition was referred, as usual, to the Committee of Correspondence for examination and report, and the reply came on the 12th of July stating that "finding by the advices from Bombay and Anjengo that his behaviour had been insolent and highly unbecoming at both places, they are of opinion that Mr. Bouchier (the Governor of Bombay) did right in sending him from Anjengo; and as he has the general character of being a very troublesome man, that he be not admitted to serve the Company as a covenanted servant or in any other station in India." Six days later, the Directors studied the report and acted according to its recommendation, but, as a concession, provided the petitioner's family with a free passage home. Carmichael, refusing the decision, renewed his application twice without any hope of changing the Directors' resolution.

Being a persistent man, Carmichael decided to return to India

<sup>1</sup> Carruthers, op. cit., p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 131.

overland, to which decision we owe this journal of the desert passage between Aleppo and Basra. Of the rest of Carmichael's life nothing is known more than we are told by Grose, as quoted above. But he must have died before 1772, the date of the publication of Grose's second edition.

Carmichael's journal is of special value for two outstanding points. First, his survey from Aleppo to Basra, worked out with great diligence, shows a considerable degree of accuracy, which does him great credit. He, like Beawes, but with more accuracy, measured the average pace of his camel, and by counting the number of paces per hour, computed his rate of travel, which is not very far from being precise. His itinerary was first used by Edward Ives in the map he attached to his *Voyage from England to India etc. London, 1773*. Eyles Irwin too used Carmichael's route among other items of reference, in the map he published in his *A Series of Adventures etc. London, 1787*. Rennel also uses Carmichael's material on Sheet IX of his Atlas in *Treatise on the Comparative Ceography of Western Asia, 1831*.<sup>1</sup>

The second important thing to notice in Carmichael's journal is his sharp observation and strong curiosity, without which we would have been deprived of his remarks on the ruined sites, his record of the aqueduct which once supplied the Quṣūr el Iḥwān from 'Ain el Qom, and his most interesting description of Uḥaiḍir, which he risked to visit and examine closely. Carruthers notes that this description of Uḥaiḍir seems to have been read by Niebuhr, for the latter's brief account of Uḥaiḍir corresponds with Carmichael's, though not given word for word.<sup>2</sup> Niebuhr's account reads as follows:

Ich habe in dem Tagebuch eines Engländers, der von Haleb nach Basra gereist war, gefunden, daß er 44 Stunden Südost nach Osten von Hêt eine ganz verlassene Stadt in der Wüste angetroffen habe, wovon die Mauer 50 Fuß hoch und 40 Fuß dick war. Jede der vier Seiten hatte 700 Fuß, und in der Mauer waren Thürme. In dieser Stadt oder grossem Castell, findet man noch ein kleines Castell. Von eben dieser verlassenen Stadt hörte ich nachher, daß sie von den Arabern El Khader genannt werde, und nur 10 bis 12 Stunden von Mesched Ali entfernt sei. Sie ist ohne Zweifel gleichfalls wegen Mangel an Wasser verlassen worden: und da man hier gar keine Städte oder Dörfer in der Nähe findet, so ist dies wohl die Ursache, daß man davon nicht alle brauchbare Steine weggebracht hat, wie von Kufa und Basra, wo fast nichts mehr übrig ist.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> Carsten Niebuhr, *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und andern umliegenden Ländern*, Copenhagen, 1778, vol. ii, p. 225, footnote.

The same passage is quoted by Massignon and Gertrude Bell.<sup>1</sup> As to Carmichael's unique interest in Uḡaidir among the preceding travellers who crossed this desert route, Carruthers comments: "Although Roberts probably saw Uḡaidir, and Beawes certainly did, it remained for Plaisted to record its name. But to Carmichael belongs the credit of being the first Englishman to appreciate its wonders, to have the initiative both to explore it, and to attempt a detailed description of the ruins".<sup>2</sup>

### 6. *Abraham Parsons (1774)*

*Route:* Aleppo – Ṭaybi – Šaiḡ Jābir – ʿĀna – Baġdād – Ḥilla – Bašra.

Being the son of a merchant captain, Parsons<sup>3</sup> was bred to the sea, and at an early age visited many countries in command of merchant vessels. After an unsuccessful business at Bristol, he was appointed in 1767 by the Levant Company as Consul and Marine Factor at Iskandarūn, a post which he held for six years, and had to resign on account of the unhealthiness of the climate. Then he began a series of travels for commercial purposes, among which was a long journey to India, reaching Bašra across the desert in 1775 during the siege of this town by a Persian army. He made a prolonged journey along the whole western coast of India as far as Goa. His return journey was along the Red Sea route, which took him to Egypt via Suez, Cairo and Rosetta. He died in Leghorn in 1785.

The manuscript of these long travels was bequeathed to Parsons's brother-in-law John Berjew, whose son, John Paine Berjew, edited and published it under the title of:

*Travels in Asia and Africa. Including a Journey from Scanderoon to Aleppo, and over the Desert to Baghdad and Bassora, etc., by the late Abraham Parsons, edited by John Paine Berjew, London, 1808.*<sup>4</sup>

### 7. *James Capper (1778)*

Capper<sup>5</sup> was born in 1743 and educated at Harrow School. After a special study as meteorologist, he entered the service of the

<sup>1</sup> Louis Massignon, *Mémoires de l'Institut français d'Archéologie orientale du Caire*, vol. xxviii, Cairo, 1910, p. 7; Gertrude Bell, *Amurath to Amurath*, London, 1911, p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Carruthers, op. cit., p. 161, footnote (1).

<sup>3</sup> DNB.

<sup>4</sup> Only edition.

<sup>5</sup> DNB; Watt's *Bibliotheca Britanica*, op. cit.; *Gentleman's Magazine* (1825), pt. ii, p. 381.

East India Company at an early age, first attaining the rank of colonel, and for some time holding the post of comptroller-general of the army and fortification accounts on the coast of Coromandel. His journey to India was undertaken in 1778 along the Aleppo-Baṣra route, and resulted in the publication of:

Observations on the Passage to India through Egypt and across the Great-Desert. London, 1783.<sup>1</sup>

This book is a survey of the various land and sea routes to India, with their qualifications, and a supplement containing some itineraries not published elsewhere.

### 8. *Samuel Evers* (1779)

*Route*: Baṣra (10 March, 1779) – Al Qurnah – (Boogerbut) <sup>2</sup> Baḥrān – (Cherry Luxannie) <sup>3</sup> – ‘Abāda – (Coote) <sup>4</sup> – the plains of Argia <sup>5</sup> – Bazool <sup>6</sup> – Samāwa <sup>7</sup> – Sebya <sup>8</sup> – Diwāniya – (on horseback): Najaf – Karbala – Ḥilla – Bagdād – Hit – Quṣūr il Iḥwān – Ṭaybiḥ – Ḥiqḥla – Aleppo (May 22) – (one month later, June 23): Ḥān Tūmān – Riḥa – Latakia – Cyprus-Rhodes – Otronto – Naples – England (end of February, 1780).

In 1779, a party of officers of the Bombay Army and Civil Service left India bound for England, passing over the northern section of the desert between Hit and Aleppo. An account of this journey was published anonymously by one of the group, Lieut. Samuel Evers, under the title:

A Journal kept on a Journey from Bassora to Bagdad, through the Little-Desert, to Aleppo, Cyprus, Rhodes, Zante, Corfu, and Otrante, in the year 1779 by a Gentleman. Horsham, 1784.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the referred first edition (A), there appeared the following other editions and translations:

B. Second edition enlarged, London, 1784.

C. Third edition with alterations and additions, London, 1785.

*French translation*

D. Voyages du Colonel Capper dans les Indes, au travers de l’Egypte et du grand désert, par Suez, en 1779. Traduits de l’Anglois, et accompagnés de notes sur l’original et des cartes géographiques. 2 vols. Londres et Paris, 1786.

I have used edition (A).

<sup>2</sup> Not identified.

<sup>3</sup> Not identified. However, there is Khairi on the Hor al Ḥammār. See the map: *The World* (GS GS 4646 Sheet NH-38, edition 8).

<sup>4</sup> Not identified.

<sup>5</sup> Not identified. Probably Erech!

<sup>6</sup> Not identified.

<sup>7</sup> Evers must have entered the tributary of the Euphrates a little north-west of Samāwa towards Diwāniyya.

<sup>8</sup> Not identified.

<sup>9</sup> Only edition.

The passage was undertaken with little difficulty, owing to the nature of the travellers, and the facilities and letters of introduction that were given to them. The journal is not devoid of some interest, especially in the pages describing Baġdād and Aleppo.<sup>1</sup> There are also brief remarks on Nimrud, Quşūr il Iḥwān, and Ṭaybih, which the traveller visited out of curious interest.<sup>2</sup> However, he does not reveal a good measure of exactness in writing the names of the sites on his route to Baġdad, and the names of the desert sites and waterings are scarcely mentioned.

### 9. *Sir Eyre Coote* (1780?)

*Route:* Zubair (Jan. 30, 1780) – Uḥaiḍir <sup>3</sup> – Qaṣr Tūmail – ‘Uqlat Ḥaurān – Quşūr ul-Iḥwān <sup>4</sup> – Taybeh – ‘Ain el Qom – El Jabbūl <sup>5</sup> – Ḥiqla – Şfira <sup>6</sup> – Aleppo (March 3).

This is a curious journal written by an anonymous person who was supposed to have accompanied Sir Eyre Coote (1726-1783) on his journey across the Syrian Desert from Baṣra to Aleppo in 1780 (?). This journal is delivered from the original MS by the diplomatist Sir Woodbine Parish, and appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. 30 (1860), under the following title:

Diary of a Journey with Sir Eyre Coote from Bussora to Aleppo in 1780 (?), from the original MS. Communicated by Sir Woodbine Parish, K.C.H., F.R.G.S., & c.

There are many doubts as to whether Sir Eyre Coote actually took part in this journey, and, if he did at all, whether the date of the journey (1780) is true. According to the Dictionary of National Biography, there is no good biography of Coote extant. However, this prominent soldier sailed for India for the first time in 1754 as captain to the 39th regiment, which was the first English regiment ever sent to India.<sup>7</sup> In 1756 after the Black Hole of Calcutta a detachment under Coote's command recaptured Fort William, and he served under Clive at the attack on Chander-

<sup>1</sup> Evers, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-51, and 102-105.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 78-80.

<sup>3</sup> Not named by the traveller, but guessed from his description. See the *Diary*, p. 204.

<sup>4</sup> Not named by the traveller, but guessed from his description; *Diary*, p. 207.

<sup>5</sup> Recognized from the traveller's description, *Diary*, p. 209.

<sup>6</sup> Mistakenly written "the town of Suppine" by the traveller, *Diary*, p. 210.

<sup>7</sup> Dictionary of National Biography; Chambers' Encyclopaedia; Carruthers, *op. cit.*, Introduction, p. xxviii.

nagore and the battle of Plassey (1757). On his return to England he was given the command of the newly raised 84th regiment, which he accompanied to India in 1759. In 1760 he defeated the French under Lally at Wandewash, a battle which led to the fall of Pondicherry and ended the French dream of dominating India. In 1769 he was appointed commander-in-chief in the Madras presidency, but, after some disagreements with the governor of Madras, he abruptly threw up his command and returned to England by the overland route through the Red Sea and Egypt, which he was one of the first to adopt, in October 1770.<sup>1</sup> In 1780, one year after he had been appointed commander-in-chief at Calcutta, Coote defeated Haider Ali, the ruler of Mysore, at the battle of Porto Novo (1781). Two years later, he died at Madras.

Of the journey across the Desert Route, there is no mention in the DNB, nor in the Chambers' Encyclopaedia. From his biography in the DNB, one gathers that Coote remained in India from 1777 until his death. In 1780, the supposed date of his Baṣra-Aleppo journey, Coote was engaged in preparing military measures against Haider Ali, and, in my opinion, the question of the date of this journey remains unanswered. There is no doubt that the journey took place, for the account and description of the main stations in the Syrian Desert are genuine and true. There are interesting descriptions of Zubair, Uḥaiḍir and Quṣūr ul Iḥwān. But of more interest are the remarks on Ṭaybeh and its neighbourhood, especially, the salt lake of Jabbūl, south of Aleppo, where the traveller counted above twenty great mounds. Woodbine Parish, the editor, supposes them to be "covering in all probability the ruins of ancient temples and buildings which to this day are still unexplored, although the existence of some of them has been known since the time of Pietro della Valle, who passed over much the same ground as the writer, and mentions having seen the ruins which he describes near Taibeh."<sup>2</sup>

#### 10. *Donald Campbell* (1781)

*Route:* Ostend, Belgium (May, 1781) – Tyrol – Venice – Alexandria – Aleppo – Diarbakr – Mosul – Bagdad – Bushire – Bombay – Goa.

<sup>1</sup> DNB.

<sup>2</sup> *Diary*, p. 198.



Campbell is better known by his description in his book of the shipwreck which he suffered in the Indian Ocean, and which led to his imprisonment by Haidar Ali.<sup>1</sup> The title of his account reads:

A Journey overland to India, partly by a Route never gone before by any European, by D. C. of Barbeck . . . In a Series of Letters to his Son, London, 1795.<sup>2</sup>

The traveller has something to say about every place which lay on his route. Of particular interest is the description of some aspects of social life in Aleppo, where he had an unsuccessful love affair with a beautiful young woman of 18 married to an aged merchant of 65, both being members of the English community at Aleppo. This occasions Campbell to reveal his inner subjective feelings, injured by the frustration of unfulfilled love, and tortured by the scorching heat of a lonesome desert journey. In this respect his romantic personal outbursts make him singular among the travellers that have been so far discussed. Of special cultural and historical value is his description of the story-tellers and the scenes of shadow shows at the coffee-houses of Aleppo, this being the most popular kind of entertainment. Campbell's remarks about the Turks and Arabs and the teachings of Islām reflect a liberal and comparatively progressive mind. His style, frankness and personal touch win his book a special charm.

## II. *Eyles Irwin* (1781)

Irwin's life and the account of his voyage up the Red Sea and through Egypt will be discussed in the next section of this dissertation. It suffices here to mention that Irwin, a servant of the East India Company, sailed from India to England early in 1777, and returned to India in 1781 in company with several other Englishmen, "entrusted with dispatches too important to admit of delay", taking the desert route from Aleppo to 'Āna, and thence passing

<sup>1</sup> DNB; Gentleman's Magazine, 1804.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the quoted edition (A) there appeared the following editions:

- B. A Narrative of the extraordinary Adventures . . . of D.C., Esq., of Barbeck . . . comprising the Occurrences of four years and five days in an overland Journey to India. Faithfully abstracted from Capt. Campbell's "Letters to his Son". (by S. J.), London, 1796.
- C. Another edition, 1797.
- D. Third edition, 1798.

### *German Translation:*

- E. Barbreck, D. C. von: Landreise nach Indien, zum Theil auf einem v. Europäern bis jetzt nie versuchten Wege. Aus dem Englischen, in einer abgekürzten Uebersetzung. Altona, 1796.

to Baġdād, Baṣra, and India. The account of his journey across the desert appeared in the third edition of his *Series of Adventures, etc.*<sup>1</sup> Irwin published with the good account a 'Map of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Babylonia,' which he compiled for the use of the East India Company from observations of Niebuhr, Ives, Carmichael, and his own personal travels.<sup>2</sup>

## 12. *Matthew Jenour* (1785)

In september, 1785, Matthew Jenour, 'on the half-pay of His Majesty's 11th Regiment of Foot', coming from India, crossed the desert between Baṣra and Aleppo, and wrote a travel-guide for this desert passage:

The Route to India through France, Germany, Hungary, Turkey, Natolia, Syria, and the Desert of Arabia, London, 1791.<sup>3</sup>

In this little guide Jenour describes the routes from England to India across the desert, and gives useful information about all the necessary preparations for this journey. We can learn from him about the best time to set off for such a journey, the average duration of each route, the costs of the guards and camels, and the amount of toll paid to the shaikhs of the desert for the safe use of the route.

## 13. *J. Griffiths* (1785)

*Route:* Gravesend (June 1785) – Exmouth – Nice – Genoa – Leghorn – Etna – Sicily – Smyrna – Constantinople – Crete – Sardis – Konia – Cilicia – Adana – Suwaydiya – Antioch – Salhin – Martavaun – Aleppo (started on June 8, 1786) – Jabbūl – 'Ain el Qom – 'Ain el Ḥarūf – Ḥiqla – Raḥaliya – Najaf – Baṣra (after 48 days from Aleppo) – Baṣīr – Musqat – Bombay.

There is no source of reference as to the life and person of this traveller extant. However, we know from his journal that he was a physician, and a member of the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh. His book runs under the following title:

Travels in Europe, Asia Minor, and Arabia. London, 1805.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eyles Irwin, *A Series of adventures in the Course of a Voyage up the Red Sea, on the Coasts of Arabia, and of a Route through the Deserts of Thebais, hitherto unknown to the European Traveller, in the year 1777, in Letters to a Lady.* London, 1780. Other editions of this book will be given in detail in a later part of this work.

<sup>2</sup> This appeared in the 1787 edition of *A Series of Adventures*, as supplement bearing the name of: *A Voyage from Venice to Latichea, and of a Route Through the Deserts of Arabia, etc.*

<sup>3</sup> Only edition.

<sup>4</sup> French translation (B):

Nouveau Voyage dans la Turquie, et d'Europe et d'Asie et en Arabie . . . Traduit par M. B. Barère de Vienzac. 2 vol., Paris, 1812.

*German Translation* (C):

Neue Reise in Arabien, die europäische und asiatische Turkey. Nach d. Engl. bearb... von K.L.M. Müller. Leipzig, 1814.

Hinting at the motives of his travels, Griffiths informs us that he "was influenced merely by my natural and irresistible inclination to visit distant and unfrequented countries; an inclination which very early persuaded me, that, with good humour, a spirit of accommodation, and an abundant share of patience, the difficulties of travelling might be surmounted, and many of its dangers avoided".<sup>1</sup>

Griffiths avoids erudition, historical digressions, and reference to the classical authors. Instead, he attempts merely to describe 'such things as he saw, the scenes in which he participated, and offering to the reader those reflections which resulted from the impressions which he received: Not the labours of an historian, tracing through all their gradations the various civil and political connections of an empire; or patiently and carefully elucidating every circumstance, or to expose its inferiority'.<sup>2</sup>

There are several points in Griffiths' book that attract particular attention. Among these are his accounts of some minor sects in Syria, such as the Nuṣairis, the Zaidis, and the Kurds. He also gives a rather lengthy description of the desert journey with some interesting details: the Arabs of the desert, the Aleppo-Baṣra caravan, its Shaikh, the way of its encampment, watering places, and some desert phenomena, such as the simoom, the mirage, and the whirling sand-storms. There are also fine descriptions of Aleppo, Najaf and Baṣra. In Aleppo, he takes more place to write on the means of pastime and recreation in the Syrian emporium. In Najaf he was especially attracted by the celebrated mosque built on the tomb of 'Ali. His curiosity to get a closer view from the inside of the mosque, with its handsome dome, could have cost him his life, had he not narrowly escaped the wrath of the enraged populace.<sup>3</sup>

#### 14. *John Taylor* (1789)

Taylor<sup>4</sup> entered the service of the East India Company in 1776 as a cadet in the Bombay army. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in 1780, became Captain in 1789, and was appointed Major in 1797. He died at Poonah in 1808. In 1789 Taylor went

<sup>1</sup> Griffiths, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Griffiths, preface, p. viii.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 372.

<sup>4</sup> DNB; Dodwell and Miles' Indian Army List, Bombay Presidency, p. 80; Reuss's Register of Living Authors, 1804, II, 376-7.

out to India by the same desert route, and recorded his journey with considerable detail under the title of:

Travels from England to India, in . . . 1789, by the way of the Tyrol, Venice, Scanderoon, Aleppo, and over the Great Desert to Bussora; with instructions to travellers, etc. 2 vols. London, 1799.<sup>1</sup>

In his book, Taylor incorporates itineraries by various routes, instructions to travellers, with tables of expenses, and even gives time-tables by a choice of routes, from London to Bašra. He concentrates in particular on the question of 'a more speedy communication between Great Britain and her Eastern dependencies.'

### 15. John Jackson (1797)

*Route:* Bombay (4 May, 1797) – Bašra – Märgil – Al Qurna – (up the Euphrates): Sūq aš Šuyūḥ – (up the Šaṭ il Garrāf): – <sup>2</sup> Al Ḥay – Kūt il 'Imāra – Baġdād – Duḥela <sup>3</sup> – Hope <sup>4</sup> – Massabbas <sup>5</sup> – Chubuccan <sup>6</sup> – Delli 'Abbās <sup>7</sup> – Adanaque <sup>8</sup> – (along the Šaṭ il Nārīn): Qara Tepe – Kifri <sup>9</sup> – Tūz Ḥurmatli – Ṭauq – Kirkuk – Altun Kopru – Erbil – Ankava – Karakoosh – Mosul – Thies – Našībīn – Mārdīn – Kurdistan – Armorica – Anatolia – Bulgaria – Wallachia – Transylvania – Hamburg (28 October).

Jackson was for six years before 1792 a wine merchant in London.<sup>10</sup> After 1786, he showed interest in archaeology, and published in *Archaeologia*, vol. viii, a description of Roman remains then lately discovered in London. He was made a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in March, 1787. Later on, he proceeded to India on private business. He returned home on 4 May, 1797, and made his journey by way of the Euphrates and the Tigris to Baġdād, and thence proceeded to England by the above-mentioned route. He published an account of this journey home, under the title:

A Journey from India towards England, 1797; by a Route commonly known Overland. London, 1799.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Only edition.

<sup>2</sup> Jackson names it Shat el Hie.

<sup>3</sup> According to Jackson, Doucolla. It lies SW of Ba'qūba. See the map, *The World* (GSGS 4646, Sheet N. I-38).

<sup>4</sup> Not identified.

<sup>5</sup> Not identified.

<sup>6</sup> Not identified.

<sup>7</sup> According to Jackson, Deaal Abbas.

<sup>8</sup> From Jackson's description, "... situated at the foot of a range of mountains, running east and west, well watered by some clear rivulets that run from the mountains ...", I suppose he means Mansuriya al Jabal. *The World*, op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> Jackson calls it Kuppree.

<sup>10</sup> DNB; Lowndes's London Directory, 1789; List of the Society of Antiquaries of London, 1717-96; Watt's Bibliotheca Britanica; Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lxxvii, pt. ii, p. 785.

<sup>11</sup> In addition to the quoted first edition (A), there appeared the following translation:

In this journal he shows that the route he followed was practicable all the year round. He shows considerable interest in stating the rate of travel, and the means of river communication. His description of the boats used in the Gulf and on the river-traffic between Baġdād and Baṣra is very interesting for the study of the means of river transport in Iraq at this period.<sup>1</sup> There is also a fair description of Baṣra, Baġdād, and Mosul.<sup>2</sup>

### 16. *Thomas Duval* (1798)

*Route:* Iskandarūn (16 August, 1798) – Aleppo – Juba – Baġdād – Baṣra (19 Sept.) – Bombay (21 Oct.).

During the period of Napoleon's campaign in Egypt, the direct route from Constantinople to Aleppo and Baṣra, was of vital importance to England, and it remained so even after Nelson's victory at the Nile, for the French still held the Red Sea. The British Consul at Aleppo was still kept busy receiving and sending official correspondence by fast riders to the Persian Gulf. In 1798 Nelson, "aware of the designs of the French, in case of succeeding at Egypt, to attack the British East India possessions, despatched, overland to Bombay, with the intelligence of the victory, Lieut. Thomas Duval, of the *Zealous*, an officer selected by Captain Hood." <sup>2</sup> Duval sailed from Cyprus to Iskandarūn, and thence to Aleppo, which he left on the 27th of August, 1798. He rode from Aleppo to Baġdād direct in twelve days, and ten days later reached Baṣra by water.

A very brief description of his route, with a short remark on the pompous palace of the Pasha of Baġdād are given in James's *Naval History*, etc.<sup>3</sup>

### D. THE OVERLAND ROUTE TO INDIA (via Egypt and the Red Sea)

After having dominated the all-sea route to India during the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries, Britain lost

#### *German Translation*

(B) Landreise aus Ostindien nach Europa, unternommen im Jahre 1797 auf einem . . . wenig bekannten Wege durch die . . . Turkey, Siebenbürgen, Ungarn und Teutschland. Auszugsweise aus dem Englischen übersetzt von M. C. Sprengel. Berlin & Hamburg, 1804.

<sup>1</sup> Jackson, op. cit., pp. 13, foot-note, and 39-41.

<sup>2</sup> William James, *The Naval History of Great Britain, from the Declaration of War by France in 1793 to the Accession of George IV*, London, 1860, vol. ii, p. 206.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, appendix 14, p. 465.

interest in the Mediterranean trade, which had been formerly of major importance for Oriental goods.<sup>1</sup> The rivalry between England and France to lay hands on the routes to India and the Far East, led the latter to concentrate her efforts in the Levant, with the hope of approaching India along the more direct overland lines, through Egypt, or through Turkey and Persia.<sup>2</sup> In Syria, France had already maintained sentimental connections dating back to the time of the Crusades, and in Persia the French East India companies continued Richelieu's attempts of 1626 to establish close diplomatic relations with Persia. They succeeded in this attempt to the extent that Persian armies in the 17th and 18th centuries were generally drilled, and frequently commanded by French military officers.<sup>3</sup> In Turkey the French continued their intrigues at the Porte to exclude the English from the favour and sympathy of the Turks, and were able to secure for themselves special privileges in Egypt.<sup>4</sup> This increasing activity of the French in this area, therefore, opened the eyes of the English to the importance of the countries bordering on the eastern Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Accordingly, English interest in returning to the trade routes of the Middle Ages showed itself first with Beawes's journey in 1745, in the case of the Desert Route, and then during the last quarter of the 18th century, in the case of the Red Sea Route.

In 1698, Henry Tistew, who had formerly been British Consul at Tripoli in Syria, traversed Egypt, and sailed down the Red Sea to Surat, with the intention of opening a trade route through Egypt and the Red Sea. His attempt failed, owing to the Ottoman ban on the navigation of the Red Sea north of Jidda by all Christian vessels because of the proximity of the Holy Cities of Medina and Mecca. But gradually, there grew such a flourishing trade in coffee between Jidda, Mocha and Bombay in English and in native vessels, that the East India Company maintained an

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<sup>1</sup> H. L. Hoskins: *The Overland Route to India in the 18th Century*, in *History*, the Quarterly Journal of the Historical Association, vol. ix, 1925, p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto.

<sup>3</sup> G. Poignant, in *Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*, vol. 35, pp. 265-6, and Le Comte de Cressat, *La Syrie Française*, pp. 22-3 passim; both cited by Hoskins, ditto.

<sup>4</sup> British and Foreign State Papers, vol. iv, No. 732; G. N. Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question*, vol. ii, pp. 548-9; both cited by Hoskins, ditto.

English resident at Mocha for part of the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> James Bruce, who arrived in Egypt in 1768,<sup>2</sup> was the first Englishman to reveal the importance of Egypt as a trade centre on the one hand, and to point to Egypt and the Red Sea as a useful route of trade and communication between Europe and India on the other hand. Bruce was active and very enthusiastic about realizing the project of utilizing this valuable route. To pave the way for English enterprise, he conferred with Ali Bey, then dictator of all Egypt, talked with the merchants of various countries, visited Upper Egypt and Egyptian Red Sea ports, and, in 1769, reached Jiddah. Here he met Captain Cuthbert Thornhill, commander of the *Merchant of Bengal*, and won his deep interest in the possibilities of opening up trade with Egypt. It was agreed between them, that Bruce, returning to Cairo by way of Upper Egypt, should attempt to conclude a commercial treaty with the Bey, while Thornhill, on his next voyage from Bengal would sail to Suez.<sup>3</sup> Encouraged by a 'very sensible letter' from Ali Bey to the Governor of Bengal, pointing out the manifold advantages of opening a trade with Egypt, Thornhill and other merchants formed a small joint stock company for the trade to Egypt. In the meantime, the newly-appointed Governor-General of Bengal, Warren Hastings, adopted the project, in the hope of using the route for the communication of dispatches to London. He encouraged Thornhill and his party, and sent to the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London, asking for support and approval of the use of the new route, for "a new and continual communication of letters with the Honble. Court of England."<sup>4</sup> Anticipating the approval of the Court, which in fact arrived a little later, Hastings sent Thornhill and the other merchants in 1774, placing a small vessel, the *Culladore*, at their service, and wishing them a successful venture. But this first attempt to utilize the Red Sea as a regular

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<sup>1</sup> H. L. Hoskins, *British Routes to India*, a doctoral thesis in History, Philadelphia, 1928, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce's celebrated journey to discover the sources of the Nile will be discussed in another part of this dissertation.

<sup>3</sup> James Bruce, *Travels . . . to discover the Source of the Nile, in the Years 1768-1773*, London, 1790, vol. i, pp. 70 ff. Hoskins, *British Routes*, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> India Office, Factory Records, Egypt and the Red Sea, vol. 5: a general letter from Bengal, 15 March, 1774; cited by Hoskins, *British Routes*, op. cit., p. 7, and *The Overland Route*, History, op. cit., p. 304.

route of trade and communication failed, for the small vessels were taken by a "violent Gale of Wind in the Bay, in which the . . . ship received great damage . . . and the Schooner has not since been heard of."<sup>1</sup>

Insisting on realizing the project, and considering the route by the Red Sea a matter of "great public utility", Hastings was able in 1775 to sign a treaty with the Egyptian Beys, who actually enjoyed a considerable degree of independence from the Porte at this time. The treaty provided for "reciprocal and entirely perfect liberty of navigation and commerce between the subjects on each part, through all and every the Dominions and Provinces under their Government in India and Egypt, concerning all and singular kinds of goods."<sup>2</sup> It also appointed Cairo as the Egyptian market. In order to secure safety in delivering the dispatches to London, the consent of the Egyptian authorities was achieved to suspend all restrictions on the sending of express messengers through Egypt with sealed packets. The response was immediate. Merchant vessels, fitted out and laden in Indian Ports, made their appearance in the Red Sea, and were soon unloading at Suez. Packets and dispatches brought at the same time were promptly transported from Suez to Cairo by special messengers, who carried them to Alexandria, and thence were shipped to England.<sup>3</sup> The Egyptian trade revived so rapidly, that the East India Company thought it proper to appoint an agent in Cairo "to have general oversight of commercial transactions and to expedite such packets of correspondence as might from time to time come from England or from India."<sup>4</sup> This office was given to George Baldwin, who had just been appointed as agent of the Levant Company in Cairo.

Baldwin's name is strongly associated with the short life of the Red Sea route to India, generally called "The Overland Route." The rest of this section, therefore, will deal with Baldwin's life and efforts for the maintenance of the Overland Route, together

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<sup>1</sup> Ditto.

<sup>2</sup> "Treaty of Navigation and Commerce between the Most Serene and Mahometan Bey of upper and lower Egypt, and the Honble. Warren Hastings, Esqr., President and Governor for affairs of the British Nation in Bengal . . . concluded at Cairo the 7th day of March, 1775." Cited by Hoskins, *History*, op. cit., pp. 304-5.

<sup>3</sup> Hoskins, *History*, p. 305.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 305.



with the journals of other travellers who used it subsequently on their way to India or England.

### 1. *George Baldwin* (1773-1779) and (1786-1798)

The eighteen years which Baldwin spent in Egypt, represent the whole life and development of the Red Sea route. The only source of information about Baldwin's life is to be found in his books.<sup>1</sup> His early life is not known, but we know that he was in 1760 in Cyprus, and in 1763 at Acre. In 1768 he returned to England, and obtained leave to go as a free mariner to the East Indies, with the idea of exploring the connection between India and Egypt by the Red Sea. However, he could not realize his purpose until 1773, when he arrived in Cairo in the time of Muḥammad Bey, who told him: "If you bring the Indian ships to Suez, I will lay an aqueduct from the Nile to Suez, and you shall drink of the Nile water."<sup>2</sup> Baldwin, seized by the idea of utilizing the Red Sea and Egypt as a regular route to India, went to Constantinople, and made his plan known to Mr. Murray, the English ambassador there, who received it favorably. In 1774 Baldwin returned to Egypt, and proceeded to Suez, whence he accompanied the holy caravan on a dromedary to Cairo. Shortly after he had been appointed agent of the Levant Company in Cairo, he was also commissioned by the East India Company to act as their agent as well. Baldwin devoted much attention to matters of navigation in Indian seas and in the Mediterranean, and drew a plan to organize the sending of dispatches between London and India, within a short time of the year, when the dangerous south-west monsoon abates.

The short revival of Indian trade with Egypt was looked upon with jealousy by the Porte. Though the treaty between the Government of India and the Beys of Egypt was signed in accordance with the rights granted to the English in the Capitulations of 1675 to trade in all Turkish ports, the Ottoman government, deprived of the benefits of such a trade, was afraid that this state of affairs might weaken the Ottoman administration in Egypt and strengthen the position of the Beys against the Porte. The Turkish government, thereupon, made representation to the newly appointed British

<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of National Biography.

<sup>2</sup> George Baldwin, *Political Recollections relative to Egypt, etc.* London, 1801, pp. 4-6.

ambassador at the Porte, Sir Robert Ainslie, claiming "that the Red Sea trade was contrary to usage, that the Red Sea adjacent to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina was held sacred and should not be profaned by commercial activities . . ." <sup>1</sup>

As Baldwin received an additional bonus on each package of correspondence safely expedited under his care, and considering his great enthusiasm for the maintenance of the Red Sea trade and communication, Ainslie suspected him of advancing his own interests at the expense of those of the Crown and the Company. The British Foreign Office, acting according to Ainslie's alarming reports, prevailed on the East India Company to stop the sending of merchant vessels to the Red Sea. The prohibition was officially issued by the Company on 4 July, 1777, and in 1780 was enforced by an Act of Parliament.<sup>2</sup> But the Egyptian trade was so lucrative that, in spite of this prohibition, English cargoes continued to arrive at Suez, which annoyed the Porte, pleased the Beys of Egypt, and put Ainslie in a critical and perplexing situation in Constantinople. Even the East India authorities continued the use of the Suez route for urgent communications. So, late in the summer of 1777, Baldwin received a packet of dispatches from the Company's Directors in London, with instructions to have them carried to India by the *Swallow*, which had arrived at Suez a few months before. But as the *Swallow* had already returned to India, and Baldwin being very enthusiastic to prove the utility of the Suez route, he took the responsibility and hired a private vessel to carry the dispatches on before the commencement of the south-west monsoon. The costs of this journey were high, amounting to £ 4,500, which indignant the Directors in London, especially that the vessel had carried private mail as well. They accused Baldwin of having violated the confidence of his employers, and refused to pay the expenses of the chartered vessel. Though Baldwin was confirmed in his position, the Red Sea route had fallen into disrepute through this incident, and in 1780 it was said that "English vessels no longer come to Suez." <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hoskins, History, op. cit., p. 307.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 308.

<sup>3</sup> Factory Records, op. cit., Correspondence of the East India House; cited by Hoskins, History, p. 309.

After Baldwin's financial blow, and his failure so far to open the overland route, another serious incident took place in 1779. A Danish vessel with an Indian cargo unloaded at the port of Suez, and the goods were to be transported with a caravan to Cairo. The caravan was attacked on the road, and the losses amounted to £ 37,500. Several of the ship's crew were killed and wounded, and the rest were seized and held for ransom. As Baldwin had invested heavily in this particular enterprise, and as he had taken the survivors under his protection, he was detained as hostage for their ransom. Having no money to pay the ransom, he was expelled from Egypt, with the entire loss of his property.<sup>1</sup> He spent the next few years in vain endeavours to recover his lost property, in new mercantile operations, and in attempting at the Court of Directors to explain and justify his past conduct. In 1783 the Court officially exonerated him from the charges against him, without however compensating him for his losses.

The hope of regaining his losses gave Baldwin new impetus to increase his efforts in London to win the case of the Red Sea route both for commerce and for communication. He published in 1784 a pamphlet to this purpose entitled:

The Communication with India by the Isthmus of Suez, vindicated from the Prejudices which have prevailed against it, whether proceeding from the supposed invincible Aversion of the Turks, or arising from Apprehensions of its Tendencies in respect to the Trade of the East India Company, in Leadenhall Street . . . <sup>2</sup>

This and other publications make Baldwin the founder of the overland route through Egypt and the Red Sea, and the forerunner of Ferdinand de Lesseps.

The withdrawal of the British from the Egyptian trade and the Red Sea communication gave the French more chances of activity and intrigues ending in the signing of a secret treaty with the Egyptian Beys on 7 February, 1785.<sup>3</sup> It guaranteed "freedom of all kinds to French merchants, gave them exemption from all dues and taxes except the usual customs, greatly reduced, and stipulated

<sup>1</sup> Factory Records, op. cit., vol. 5: Papers No. 253 et seq.; cited by Hoskins, History, p. 310.

<sup>2</sup> Contained also in India Office, Factory Records, vol. 5; cited by Hoskins, British Routes . . . etc., p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Factory Records, Dundas Papers, No. 11. "Convention between the Court of France and the Government of Egypt, concluded with the latter on the Part of France by the Chevalier de Truquet"; cited by Hoskins, History, p. 312.

for the right of transmitting sealed messages through Egypt.”<sup>1</sup> A copy of the treaty was surreptitiously obtained by secret agents in Egypt, and sent to the British ambassador Ainslie, who, after hesitation and cautious reflection, submitted it to the Turkish authorities. These showed great alarm at the situation, and promised immediate action against the Franco-Egyptian pact. The Ottomans soon found an occasion to send an army to Egypt to quell a rebellion. This force effectually ended the independence of the Beys, and thus upset French plans.

In fact, the attention of the British Government had been drawn to the growing activities of the French since 1778, and it was thought more advisable to establish a consulate in Cairo to watch the movements and activities of the French. George Baldwin was the best man for the job, since only a little while earlier he had submitted to the Government complete plans for a route of communication to India, including financial estimates. This memorandum appeared under the title of:

Political Recollections relative to Egypt; Containing Observations on Its Government under the Mamelukes, Its Geographical Position;—Its intrinsic and extrinsic Resources;—Its Relative Importance to England and France; and Its Dangers to England in the Possession of France. London, 1801.<sup>2</sup>

By a joint appointment from the Foreign Office and the East India Company, Baldwin became Consul-General with the two main duties: (1) to negotiate a final treaty for a Suez route of trade and communication, and (2) to watch the activities of the French. Baldwin arrived in Cairo in December 1786, and found that a Turkish army had been in process of putting down a rebellion of some of the Beys, and all Egypt was in the utmost confusion. But he was nevertheless officially recognized as Consul-General by the existing Turkish authorities. He found plenty of evidence that the French had made ready to follow up their treaty. French agents were everywhere; French cargoes were awaiting an opportunity to land at Suez; and soon a French frigate came from India bearing dispatches.

After the victory of the Turks over the rebellious Beys, Baldwin conferred with the Capitan Pasha, who had led the Turkish cam-

<sup>1</sup> Hoskins, *History*, op. cit., pp. 312-13.

<sup>2</sup> There is a second edition, with . . . additions, London, 1802.

paign, and attempted to reach a treaty with him allowing the passage of British ships to Suez, relying in his negotiations on the Capitulations of 1675. The Capitan Pasha, unable to give an absolute refusal owing to the French activities, promised Baldwin entire security and freedom of passage for English mails and goods as long as his control lasted in Egypt. Ainslie made further petitions to effect the desired treaty with the Porte, but the authorities at Constantinople evaded a direct reply, allowing it to be understood, however, that no objection would be raised to the arrival of a reasonable number of English vessels at the head of the Red Sea.

Within a year from the announcement of the reopening of navigation, loaded English vessels were anchored in Egyptian ports and the mart at Cairo was in full operation. The French in the meantime recognized that as long as English diplomacy prevailed at the Porte and Egypt remained a part of the Ottoman Empire, French interests in the Near East were continually in danger. They were compelled therefore "to watch for favorable circumstances under which Egypt might be entirely detached from the Turkish Empire by force of arms and established as a French colony or protectorate. The far-sighted Napoleon undoubtedly understood this situation well before his rise to supreme power in France."<sup>1</sup>

At the time when Russian and French designs on Egypt were showing themselves strongly especially French designs, since the French were determined to maintain both postal and commercial contact with India by way of the Red Sea, the English authorities terminated Baldwin's appointment as British consul on February 8, 1793, and thus withdrew from Egypt their only establishment—the Consulate. The reason was the unimportance of the existing trade of the country to Great Britain, and the high expenses of the Red Sea passage, owing to the monsoon that prevails six months in the year. However, this decision was unwise, for in 1793 war was declared between Britain and France, and the connection between London and India through Egypt became far more essential than at any time since the establishment of Baldwin's post. The latter gave a practical proof of this fact by offering a great piece of service to his mother country. Receiving the news of the fresh hostilities

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<sup>1</sup> Hoskins, *History*, p. 317.

that had broken out between France and Great Britain, Baldwin at once delivered the news to India before the French garrison there had heard of it, enabling the English to capture Pondicherry, and "to expel the French from India, and to decide the fate of the war in that country a second time, and to the great honour and incalculable advantage of England."<sup>1</sup> The news of this step caused Henry Dundas, Secretary of War and President of the Board of Control, to reopen with the Foreign Office the matter of maintaining the consular post in Egypt, alluding to the services of Baldwin who had shown himself so zealous in imperial matters. But Lord Grenville, the Foreign Secretary, was decided on closing the consulate.

Baldwin left all his property behind him and sailed on 14 March 1798 to England. "He was old, feeble, and nearly blind . . . But before the impending stroke was delivered by his enemies the French, to whose undoing he had devoted the better portion of his life, even he had left Egypt to spend his last days in his own country, which had rewarded his services so poorly."<sup>2</sup>

By the end of Baldwin's residence in Egypt, the story of the overland route came to its end. The same year witnessed Napoleon's Egyptian expedition, and his expulsion by the British, which led a series of military writers to publish accounts of this episode that will be dealt with in a later section of this dissertation.

Baldwin's ideas and observations on Egypt are mainly contained in his *Recollections* in which he shows the importance of Egypt as a trade centre and a strategic area. In many cases he proved to be more far-sighted than his government in recognizing the importance of Egypt's position between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, and in anticipating French intrigues and their undying plots to seize this area. Two years before Napoleon's expedition, and before the British government suspected anything, Baldwin wrote:

"In 1796 a certain Tinville arrived in Cairo to inveigle Beys of Egypt into the designs of the French, and particularly to obtain consent to their project of passing an army through Egypt, to the East Indies, by the Red Sea, in order to strengthen Tipoo (the Sultan of Nysore), and finally to annihilate the British Dominion in the East Indies."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Baldwin, *Political Recollections* . . . etc., p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Hoskins, *British Routes*, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Baldwin, *Political Recollections*, p. 28.

## 2. *Eyles Irwini* (1777)

*Route:* Madras (February 1777) – Cape Aden – the Straits of Bab il-Mandab – Mocha – Yanbu‘ il Baħr – the Bay of Bānās – the Island of Ḥasana – Qusair – the Island of Nu‘mān – Jabal-i-Ššary – Muwailiħ Island of Tīrān – Rās Muħammad – the Gulf of Suez – Quṣair – Banūt-Qina – Cairo – Rosetta – Alexandria – England.

Eyles Irwin<sup>1</sup> was born in Calcutta about 1751 and educated in England. Being appointed on 21st November 1766 to a small job in the East India Company's service in the Madras presidency, he returned to India in February 1768, and in 1771 was appointed superintendent of the Company's grounds within the bounds of Madras. Upon the deposition of Lord Pigot in 1776, Irwin signed a protest against the revolution in the Madras government, and on his refusal to accept the post of assistant at Vizagapatam, to which he was appointed by the Council in November 1776, he was suspended from the Company's service. In order to seek redress, Irwin sailed for England early in 1777. He gave a full account of this journey of eleven months in his book:

A Series of adventures in the Course of a Voyage up the Red Sea, on the Coasts of Arabia, and of a Route through the Desarts of Thebais, hitherto unknown to the European Traveller, in the year 1777, in Letters to a Lady. London, 1780.<sup>2</sup>

Irwin arrived in England at the close of the year, and found that he had already been reinstated in the service of the Company. Returning to India in the autumn of 1780 by the Aleppo-Başra route, which is described in the third edition of his *Series of Adventures etc.*<sup>3</sup>, he was appointed in 1781 a member of the committee of 'assigned revenue', and gave many services as a revenue specialist.

<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of National Biography.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the first edition (A), there appeared the following editions and translations:  
B. A Series of Adventures in the course of a Voyage up the Red Sea, . . . with a Supplement of a Voyage from Venice to Latichea, and of a Route through the Desarts of Arabia, by Aleppo, Bagdad, and the Tygris, to Busrah, in the years 1780 and 1781, in Letters to a Lady. London, 1781.

C. London, 1784.

D. London, 1787.

*German Translation*

E. Begebenheit einer Reise auf dem Rothen Meere, und auf der Arabischen und Aegyptischen Küste, ingleichen durch die Thebaische Wüste. Aus dem Englischen von J. A. Engelbrecht. Leipzig, 1781.

*French Translation*

F. Voyage à la Mer Rouge, sur les côtes de l'Arabie, en Egypte et dans les Déserts de la Thebaïde suivi d'un Voyage à Bassorah, . . . en 1780 et 1781. Traduit de l'anglais sur la 3me édition, par J. P. Parraud. Paris, 1792.

I have used edition (A).

<sup>3</sup> See above pp. 72-3.

Towards the close of 1781 Irwin was compelled to return to England on account of his health. In 1792 he was sent out with two colleagues to Chins, where he remained rather less than two years. He retired from the service in 1794, and in the following year was an unsuccessful candidate for a directorship of the Company. The remainder of his days he passed in retirement, devoting himself chiefly to literary pursuits. Irwin died at Clifton, near Bristol, on 12th August 1817. He appears to have been an honest and able administrator. His character is said to have been 'remarkable for its amiable simplicity.'

The *Series of Adventures* is in the form of memoirs in three long letters addressed to a lady. The author, who must have endured many vicissitudes of fortune during this journey, magnified the hardships he met by a sense of impatience which filled the account with too many incidents and episodes, making the narrative colourless and disconnected. However, Irwin affords us with original descriptions of the city of Mocha and its trade, and of the conditions of Red Sea navigation between Yanbu' and the head of the sea. The difficult desert passage between the Red Sea and Cairo, and the continual molestations and raids of the Bedouins en route are described with much detail to illustrate plainly some of the shortcomings of the overland route.

### 3. *James Capper* (1778)

In his *Observations, etc.*,<sup>1</sup> Capper shows particular interest in the passage to India, sparing no information or instructions for the guidance of his fellow-travellers. It is written in the form of a letter to a person of rank to whom Capper stresses the importance of this route for Indian communication. In addition to the geographical descriptions and useful instructions, the book abounds with historical digressions about Egypt and its population. But these eruditions tend to confound the reader and prejudice him. As most travellers of the time he considers the reading of the *Arabian Nights* a requisite for the understanding of the Orient. He thus advises the reader 'by all means to peruse these Arabian Nights Entertainments before you set out on your journey.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above pp. 68-9.

<sup>2</sup> Capper, *op. cit.*, p. 13.



4. *Mrs Eliza Fay* (1779)

On her passage to India, Mrs. Eliza Fay arrived in Egypt late in July, 1779, and continued her journey down the Red Sea. Her remarks on Egypt and her impressions during the Red Sea passages appeared early in her collection of letters bearing the titles:

Original Letters from India containing a narrative of a Journey through Egypt and the author's imprisonment at Calcutta . . . etc. By Mrs. Fay. Calcutta, 1817.<sup>1</sup>

Her letters on Egypt are among the best she wrote, describing her adventures in the country, and the Red Sea route. Her descriptions reveal an individuality of outlook which marks her out from the rest of her fellow-travellers. What characterizes her particularly is her freedom from all the classical and historical disquisitions to which her contemporary travellers were addicted. E. M. Forster calls her letters a work of art chiefly because every word she wrote faithfully reflected her character.<sup>2</sup> Rushdy writes of her: "It is in this fidelity to herself, combined with an extraordinary keenness of perception, that the freshness of her writing lies; even the old and familiar theme of the 'ruins of empire' is turned in her hands into something new and lively because she makes us feel it was personal."<sup>3</sup>

5. *Henry Rooke* (1781)

*Route:* (with the British fleet) Portsmouth (March, 1781) – the Channel – Bay of Biscay – off the Island of Madeira – St. Jago – Trinidad – Island of Joanna – Morebat (on the coast of Yemen). Here deserted the fleet and set on to return to Europe. – Mocha – Ḥudaida – Island of Kamarān – Qunfuda – Jidda – Yanbu<sup>c</sup> – Jabal Ḥasani – Muwailiḥ – Island of Tīrān – Ras Muḥammad – Isle of Ṣadwān – Tor – Suez – Cairo – Rosetta – Alexandria – Rhodes – Candia – Tunis – Leghorn, (August, 1782).

Henry Rooke, 'Major of the 100th Regiment of Foot', undertook this journey originally with the British fleet that included commercial and transport ships. The story of this expedition to India round the Cape of Good Hope is given with more detail in "*A Narrative of a Voyage to Arabia, India, etc. London, 1797*", by Silas James,

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the first edition there appeared the following editions:

B. 2nd edition, Calcutta, 1821.

C. The Original Letters from India of Mrs. Eliza Fay, with introduction and notes by the Rev. W. K. Ferminger, Calcutta, 1908.

D. Original Letters from India (1779-1815) by Eliza Fay. Edited by E. M. Forster, London, 1925.

<sup>2</sup> E. M. Forster's edition, p. 13; cited by Rushdy, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Rushdy, p. 48.

one of the crew in this 'grand fleet'. A violent gale raged near the coasts of Arabia, and Rooke's ship was cut off from the rest of the fleet, and took refuge to the port of Morebat in Yemen. Here Rooke decided to desert the expedition and return to Europe.

In his account, Rooke gives a fair description of Mocha, Jidda and Suez. Of particular interest are his minute accounts of the different Arab vessels and ships in use in the Red Sea navigation. Rooke experienced almost nothing of the harshness and danger that accompanied Irwin's passage through Egypt, which may be attributed to the difference in the psychological mood of each of the travellers during his journey. While Irwin's hopes were fixed on the maintenance of his position in India, and while he was impatient to reach England and seek redress, Rooke had nothing to regret, and was only happy to return home. Another reason may be that Irwin was loaded with much luggage and had a full purse, whereas Rooke probably had only modest means. This caused a difference in the outlook and remarks of each of them, especially on Egypt. Rooke is reserved, self-possessed and passionless, and Irwin is feverish and pressed the whole journey by an irresistible feeling of haunting danger.

Rooke's account appeared under the following title:

Travels to the Coast of Arabia Felix, and from thence, by the Red Sea and Egypt, to Europe, containing a short Account of an Expedition undertaken against the Cape of Good Hope; in a series of Letters. London, 1783.<sup>1</sup>

### 6. *Hugh Cleghorn* (1795)

*Route:* Yarmouth (24 Feb. 1795) – Cruxhaven – Hamburg – Hesse – Cassel – Frankfurt/M Darmstadt – Carlsruhe – Bern – Innsbrück – Padua – Venice – Alexandria (10 June) – Rosetta – Cairo – Suez – Tor – Janbu<sup>c</sup> – Jidda – Hudaïda – Mocha – Tellicherry (India).

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the first edition (A), there appeared the following editions and translations:

B. 2nd edition with additions, London, 1784.

#### *German Translation*

C. Reisen nach den Küsten des glücklichen Arabiens und von da über das Rothe Meer und Aegypten nach Europa zurück; worin ein kurzer Bericht von einem gegen das Vorgebirge der guten Hoffnung unternommen Seezüge geliefert wird. In einer Reihe von Briefen. Nach der 2 verm. Engl. Ausgabe übersetzt. Leipzig, 1787.

#### *French Translation*

D. Voyage sur les Côtes de l'Arabie Heureuse, sur la Mer Rouge et en Egypte, . . . ; avec une Notice sur l'Expedition de M. Suffrein au Cap de Bonne-Espérance. Traduit de l'Angloise par M. L. M. Langlès. Paris 1788; 1805.

I have used edition (A).

This passage across Egypt and the Red Sea is part of an adventurous journey to Ceylon in 1795 which resulted in the annexation of this island to the British Empire. The account of this passage across the overland route is extracted from:

The Cleghorn Papers . . . Being the Diary, 1795-1796, of Hugh Cleghorn of Stravithie; edited by the Rev. William Neil. London, 1927.<sup>1</sup>

Cleghorn's life, or the history of how a Swiss regiment became part of the British Army, and the Island of Ceylon part of the British Empire, has been compiled by the editor Neil from the letters and diaries of the traveller, delivered by his great-grandson, Colonel Sir Alexander Sprot.<sup>2</sup> H. Cleghorn was probably born at the end of 1751.<sup>3</sup> In 1773 he became professor of civil history in the University of St. Andrews. In 1793 the chair was declared vacant owing to Cleghorn's long continued absences from his academic duties, and after he had been forced to resign. His ambition to get in touch with the actual political life of Europe, and his ardent desire to visit foreign countries made it impossible for such a man to remain in the seclusion of university life. Owing to his connections and political activity, he was employed by the British Government in many important missions abroad. He was a close observer from his situation in Switzerland, of all the great events passing in France, and, to a certain extent, he became acquainted with all the great men of his time.<sup>4</sup>

The last five years of his academic position were stirring years in the history of Europe. It was the time that began with the French Revolution, when Pitt was Prime Minister and Henry Dundas was one of the Secretaries of State. The professor of civil history was witnessing then the development of momentous events, and watching a Europe in convulsions and 'entertaining visions of advantage for his country, and, incidentally, perhaps also for

<sup>1</sup> Only edition.

<sup>2</sup> There is no reference to Cleghorn in any known biographical work. But, according to William Neil, his editor, there is mention of his name in an article on the "Ceylon Civil Service" in the Christmas number of the *Times of Ceylon*, 1914. There is also an article on "Hugh Cleghorn, Ceylon's First Colonial Secretary" in the *Ceylon Antiquary* for October 1922. A third mention appears in a list of Civil Servants in a volume called *Ceylon*, published by Plâté in 1924. See *Cleghorn Papers*, op. cit., preface, p. ix.

<sup>3</sup> *The Cleghorn Papers*, op. cit., Sprot's foreword, p. v.

<sup>4</sup> From a letter sent by Cleghorn to Dr. Bell, the founder of the Madras College, in October, 1831; *Papers*, preface, p. xi.

himself in the issue'.<sup>1</sup> The war with Holland, which possessed vast and rich territories in the East, bred the idea of contriving to win the Island of Ceylon, one of the richest among Dutch possessions, for the British crown. During his European sojourns, Cleghorn had formed a friendship with Count Charles Daniel de Meuron, a Swiss count, who was the proprietor and colonel of a Swiss regiment of infantry in the pay of the Dutch East India Company, which formed the main part of the Dutch garrison of Ceylon.<sup>2</sup> Cleghorn's scheme was to persuade Count de Meuron, and secure the transfer of this regiment from the Dutch to the English service, and thus achieve the conquest of Ceylon in a cheap and easy way. He communicated his plan to the English government, and the far-sighted Dundas, seeing the value of the proposal, gave his approval, and commissioned Cleghorn to settle the matter.

After Cleghorn's success in winning the Swiss count to the British cause, both of them set out from Venice, on their secret overland passage to Ceylon, and the result of this adventurous journey was, as already mentioned, the annexation of Ceylon to the British Empire. Cleghorn became the first Colonial Secretary of Ceylon, but, as a result of disagreement with the Governor, he returned home and ended his days at Stravithie, until he died in 1834.

The Egyptian section of Cleghorn's journal is especially interesting for the description of the mode of travel, and particularly of the Red Sea navigation. He vividly depicts the difficulties and dangers that accompany a Red Sea voyage, which arise not only from the nature of the waters and their coral banks, but also from the bad condition of the boats, and the over-crowdedness and unreasonable exploitation of the vessels in use at the time. He needed three weeks from Suez to Judda in 'a bark of not 70 tons and which contained upwards of 200 passengers'.<sup>3</sup> There are also some informative remarks on Suez, Jidda, and Ḥudaida.

#### E. ADVENTURE, ANTIQUARIANISM AND EXPLORATION

This section deals with travels that were undertaken in the Near East from adventurous, antiquarian or explorational motives.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, preface, pp. 1-4.

<sup>2</sup> See under *Meuron* in the *Historisch-Biographisches Lexicon der Schweiz*, Neuenburg, 1929.

<sup>3</sup> *Cleghorn Papers*, p. 143.

All three interests require that curiosity and thirst to reveal the unknown, which led great travellers to defy all sorts of perils and convey to mankind a huge stock of diverse information. The travellers to be discussed here are not first-rate antiquarians or explorers, yet they played a considerable rôle in adding new data to human knowledge. Joseph Pitts, to begin with, was the first known Englishman to visit Al-Ka'bah in Mecca, and the first to write in 1704 about Mecca and Medina, and describe the holy Ḥajj from personal experience. Robert Wood was the first English dilettanti to give the English public accurate description of Palmyra in Syria in 1753, and of Baalbek in Lebanon in 1757, and to employ his Near Eastern wanderings in writing his celebrated *Essay on the Original Genius of Homer*.<sup>1</sup> R. Pococke, Shaw and Norden were the forerunners of modern Egyptian archaeology and the co-founders of the Egyptian Society in England. James Bruce was the earliest Englishman to point emphatically to the importance of Egyptian and Red Sea trade, and to suggest the opening of a Red Sea Communication between England and India. Besides, he belongs to the first travellers who opened the eyes of succeeding English travellers to the charms of African exploration. W. G. Browne's account is the first report on Nubia and Darfur in the English language.

We have seen already that, during the eighteenth century, the Grand Tour became almost a necessity to round off the education of the young peers and gentry, in the course of which the young graduate of Oxford or Cambridge came in contact with the antiquities of Rome and Greece. Thus the chief interest of the first half of the 18th century lay in classical antiquities, mainly roused and popularized by the accounts of grand tourists.<sup>2</sup> With the growing interest in classical antiquities, the 18th century witnessed the foundation of several societies with the object of promoting interest in exploration, archaeology and antiquities. The striking event in this direction was the foundation of the Society of Antiquaries in 1718. As this society had rather strict regulations for the admittance of new members, a group of young and wealthy peers, lately

<sup>1</sup> London, 1769. See Hans Hecht, T. Percy, R. Wood und J. D. Michaelis, drittes Heft der Göttinger Forschungen, Stuttgart, 1933, pp. 19 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Joan Evans, *A History of the Society of Antiquaries*, Oxford, 1956, p. 93; A. S. Turberville (editor), *Johnson's England*, Oxford, 1952, vol. 2, pp. 20-21.

returned from the Grand Tour, formed themselves into a sort of tavern society which gave birth in 1734 to the Society of Dilettanti.<sup>1</sup> The Society was founded in part for convivial purposes, in part for the encouragement of the arts. Yet its members, during the first years of its existence, satisfied themselves with the frivolous and convivial side of the tavern meetings, and almost forgot that the society had been founded for more serious purposes too. But with the increase of the funds of the society, there appeared two strong currents within the members, one supporting the merely courtly and sociable aims of the society, and the other striving for much nobler aims. When the latter won the upper hand, and the financial means of the Dilettanti Society grew to a reasonable amount, it became the main purpose of the society to undertake the research and study of existing monuments in the countries of antiquity, and to adopt and encourage the efforts of young pioneers in this field. However, this was impossible at the beginning without the individual efforts of a few lovers of art, whether within or without the society. Thus Lord Charlemont was the first to start these pioneer expeditions in 1749 in Greece, after which he published the first engravings of the Parthenon and the Erechtheion, and was the first to discriminate between Greek and Roman art.<sup>2</sup>

The Dilettanti Society then supported and adopted the efforts of the painter James Stuart and the architect Nicholas Revett, who had been for three years since 1751 measuring, drawing and recording the ruins of Athens. To their *Antiquities of Athens*, issued in 1762, we owe the first notion on Greek art in its noblest form.<sup>3</sup> In 1751 Robert Wood and James Dawkins, a little before their expedition to Palmyra and Baalbek, met Stuart and Revett in Athens where the latter were deeply occupied with their noble work.

Of all these connoisseurs, we are only interested in Wood, and because his antiquarian activities and his works on Palmyra and Baalbek represent part of this strong hellenistic movement encouraged by the Dilettanti Society, I have been occasioned to talk about this society. All the above-mentioned pioneers of Greek art

<sup>1</sup> Adolf Michaelis, *Die Gesellschaft der Dilettanti in London*, *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, Bd. 14, Leipzig, 1879, p. 133; Hecht, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-8; A. S. Turberville, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> Turberville, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Michaelis, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

returned home and joined the Dilettanti Society where Wood offered considerable services through his experience and undying diligence.<sup>1</sup>

The erudite works of Richard Pococke<sup>2</sup>, Thomas Shaw, Frederick Norden, Charles Perry<sup>3</sup> and other antiquaries of the first half of the 18th century stimulated a growing interest in the field of Egyptology. In 1739 William Stukeley, one of the remarkable founders of the Society of Antiquaries, was interested in the foundation of an Egyptian Society 'for the promoting and preserving Egyptian and other antient learning'.<sup>4</sup> In December 1741, Lord Sandwich,<sup>5</sup> Norden, Pococke, Perry, Stukeley and others founded the Egyptian Society, Lord Sandwich being elected as President with the title of 'Sheich'.<sup>6</sup> Though the Egyptian Society did not last for more than two years, and held only twenty-two meetings with only four significant papers read before the members, it was one of the first bodies established at the very outset of the Romantic movement. In fact only a few members were noted antiquaries, yet the Egyptian Society fostered archaeological interests, and included members of all professions and walks of life, bound by their love of Egyptian antiquity.<sup>7</sup> Our concern is to discuss the travellers who contributed with their accounts in stirring this Egyptological interest in England during the 18th century.

In spite of the Elizabethan world-wide explorations and discoveries, the heart of Africa remained a closed secret to English travellers until the last quarter of the 18th century. Bruce's expedition to discover the sources of the Nile in 1768, and Peterson's four journeys from the Cape to the Orange river and Kaffir land<sup>8</sup> aroused in England considerable curiosity and interest in African exploration. This led a group of dilettanti to found on the 9th of June 1788 an 'Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior of Africa', later known as the African Association—an

<sup>1</sup> Ditto; Hecht, 21.

<sup>2</sup> See above pp. 35-8.

<sup>3</sup> See above pp. 38-9.

<sup>4</sup> J. Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>5</sup> See above pp. 39-40.

<sup>6</sup> Evans, 94; *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, vii, 1852, pp. 143-58.

<sup>7</sup> Anis, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>8</sup> William Paterson, *Narrative of Four Journeys into the Country of the Hottentots, and Caffraria, 1777-79*, London, 1790.

event which marks the beginning of the modern exploration of Africa.<sup>1</sup> The primary object of this society was to promote the discovery of Africa, together with the advancement of British trade and colonization in the black continent.<sup>2</sup> What concerned the African Association in Central Africa in the first place was the river Niger: its source and the direction of its flow. Avoiding the Barbary states in North Africa to escape the danger of belligerent Bedouins and Moors and the discouraging political unrest, the African Association made Egypt the starting point of its expeditions to discover the sources of the Senegal, Niger and Gambia rivers.<sup>3</sup> The accounts of these expeditions contain many remarks on Egypt, after the travellers had spent some time in Cairo studying the language and preparing themselves to accompany the caravans going to Darfur and further to the south. This period of scientific exploration begins with Bruce's travels and later on with the individual journey of W. G. Browne to the oasis of Siwa (1792) and more important to Darfur (1793), both preceeding the activities of the African Association.

We may now turn to the study of those travellers whose wanderings and accounts contributed, directly or indirectly, in forming or animating part of the antiquarian and explorational interests of the 18th century embodied in the above-mentioned societies and movements.

### I. *Joseph Pitts* (1680)

*Route:* Algiers (1680) – Alexandria – Cairo – Suez – Jidda – Mecca – Medina – Cairo – Algiers – Smyrna (1693) – Leghorn – Florence – Augsburg – Frankfurt/M – Mainz – Cologne – Rotterdam – Helvoetsluys – Harwich – Exeter (1694).

This traveller belongs actually to the last quarter of the 17th century, but he has been included here because his account found its way, to the readers for the first time in 1704. His report, rich though condensed, is of special importance; the traveller is the

<sup>1</sup> Proceedings of the Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, London, 1790, pp. 7-9; Hugh Murray, Historical Account of Discoveries and Travels in Africa, by the late John Leyden, M.D., enlarged, Edinburgh, 1817, vol. I, pp. 286-7; J. N. L. Baker, A History of Geographical Discovery and Exploration, London, 1948, p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> The Journal of Frederick Horneman's Travels, from Cairo to Mourzouk, the Capital of the Kingdom of Fezzan, in Africa, in the Years 1797-8. London, 1801, Introduction; Baker, op. cit., p. 302; Cox, op. cit., vol. I, p. 388.

<sup>3</sup> Anis, p. 87.



first known Englishman to write about Mecca during the Ḥajj season direct from first-hand experience.

Pitts was born in Exeter in 1663, and was to become a sailor.<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1678, he sailed as an apprentice on board an English merchantman 'bound for the West Indies, New foundland, Bilbao, the Canaries, and so home'. On the journey back to England the vessel was captured off the Spanish coast by an Algerian corsair, commanded by a Dutch renegade, who sold the whole crew as slaves in Algiers.

Pitts was bought by an Algerian merchant who, in the attempt of changing his slave's faith, treated him with utmost barbarity. In 1680 Pitts was sold to another master who was much worse than the first, for he was firmly resolved to convert Pitts into the Mohammedan faith. He tortured the unfortunate slave by thrashing his feet with a cudgel until they bled, and choking his cries by ramming his heel into his mouth. The master and his brother gave him the most brutal treatment imaginable, until at last he was forced to repeat the words; "There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is the prophet of Allah." However, Pitts was able to write to his father in England, and told him of the tortures he was undergoing. His father asked him to be firm and remain a true Christian. But this letter reached Pitts only too late, which caused him bitter remorse and disappointment. After a while, Pitts changed hands; his third master was a kind and pious old man. He treated him kindly, and allowed him to accompany him to Mecca in 1680.<sup>2</sup>

They departed from Algiers by sea to Alexandria, and thence to Cairo, Suez and Jiddah. Mecca left a gloomy impression on Pitts; the excessive heat tortured him, and the rituals and services of al-Ḥaj were not very amusing. Nothing deserved his admiration more than the visit to 'Arafāt, where thousands of helpless human beings sought God's mercy and forgiveness in full humility and devotion. When al-Ḥaj was over, and four months in Mecca, Pitts

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<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of National Biography; K. V. Zettersteen, *Kristna i Mekka*, Uppsala, 1943, p. 18 ff; Richard Burton's *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, 1893, ii, pp. 358 ff; R. H. Kiernan, *The Unveiling of Arabia, The Story of Arabian Travel and Discovery*, London, 1937, pp. 83-7.

<sup>2</sup> There is an obvious mistake in the DNB, where the pilgrimage is mentioned to have been accomplished in company with the second master, whereas, according to Pitts' account, it took place in company with the third.

and his old master followed the caravans on the route between Medina and Cairo, travelling forty days, with nothing to see but sand and arid desert. Shortly after Pitts reached Algiers, he was finally manumitted in reward to his loyalty. He remained, however, in the service of his benevolent master as a supercargo, and then was recruited in the soldiery. Although he had acquired his full freedom, it was very dangerous and almost impossible for him to leave Algiers, as the renegades were very jealously put under strict observation. At last in 1693, he went with a group of soldiers to Smyrna, where he succeeded in effecting his escape in a French vessel to Leghorn, through the agency of William Raye, the English consul at Smyrna. From Leghorn he accomplished the journey home on foot and arrived in 1694 at Exeter, where he was welcomed by his father, and was greatly relieved to find that his opportunism in adopting the creed of Islam had been condoned by his father's spiritual advisors. He was living in Exeter in May 1731, aged 68, but the date of his death has not been ascertained.

In 1704 Pitts published at Exeter:

A Faithful Account of the Religion and Manners of the Mahometans, in which is a particular Relation of their Pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>1</sup>

We may generally divide the material of Pitt's account into three main parts: his general notions of Algeria, his report on Egypt, and his most interesting information on Mecca, Arabia's ancient centre of trade and religion. In addition, there is the rich and bulky part on the creed and teachings of Islam in general, dispersed in several parts of the book.

The part on Algeria, though of considerable importance, does not fit within the frame of our main subject, and will be, therefore overlooked here. Pitts remained in Egypt long enough to observe the country and study its people. Besides a few general remarks on the Nile, climatic conditions of the country and its agriculture, he

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the first edition (A), there appeared also the following editions:

(B) 2nd edition, Exeter, 1717.

(C) 3rd edition, dedicated to Peter King, first lord King, with additions and corrections, 1731.

(D) 4th ed., 1738.

It also appeared in vol. xvii of *The World Displayed* (1778), and as an appendix to Henry Maundrell's *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*, London, 1810.

I have used edition (D).

describes the people of Cairo, how they dress and live. In this part of his work, he throws light on some corners of Egyptian social life particularly the demi-monde and slave-trade.

Pitts gives detailed description of the whole ceremonies of al-Ḥajj, and of the great Ḥaram, or sanctuary, and of the Ka‘bah, which he visited, and even had a peep into its interior. In addition, there is a fair description of the cave of Ḥirā, and of the holy Sepulchre of Muḥammad in Medina. Pitts’ remarks about Mecca give the man credit for his veracity, and two centuries later Richard Burton, who made the same pilgrimage, testified to Pitts’ account.<sup>1</sup>

After all considerations, it is fair to say that Pitts is in many points objective and accurate, but at times tends to show a tint of bigotry, which is probably stirred by a secret admiration of the zeal and devotedness of Muslims. His occasional fits of prejudice may be explained by his strong desire to convince his Christian readers of his unshaking loyalty and fidelity to the Christian faith, and of the falsehood of his conversion into Islam, a desire occasioned by his undying feeling of remorse.

## 2. *Thomas Shaw (1721)*

There is no systematic or regular itinerary of Shaw’s journeys in North Africa, Egypt, Syria and Palestine. Nor do we find any definite mention of his arrivals and departures. Therefore there is no point here in stating the routes of his travels.

Shaw was born on the 4th of June, 1694, at Kendal, Westmorland.<sup>2</sup> He received his early education at Kendal grammar school. Then he matriculated from Queen’s College, Oxford, in 1711, and graduated B.A. in 1716 and M.A. in 1720. His first travels abroad started late in 1720, when he went out as chaplain to the English factory at Algiers—an appointment effected by the interest of the English consul, Edward Holden, with whom he lived during his twelve years’ residence in that country, and whom he gratefully acknowledges as his ‘generous friend and benefactor’. The British factory in Algiers was a small one, and, accordingly, there were

<sup>1</sup> Richard Burton, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, 376 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Dictionary of National Biography; the Gentleman’s Magazine, 1751, p. 381; Nichols’s Literary Anecdotes, ii, 288; Thomson’s History of the Royal Society, App. p. xxxix, North American Review, xxii, p. 409; Allibone’s Dictionary of English Literature.

very few calls for the duties of Shaw's profession, which left him much leisure to indulge deeply in his inclinations for travel and discovery. The result of his curious activities was a series of expeditions to Egypt, the Sinaitic peninsula and Cyprus (1721), Jerusalem, the Jordan, and Mount Carmel (1722), Tunis and the ruins of Carthage (1727), in addition to various excursions in Algeria, Tripoli and Morocco. His physical strength and endurance were united with a thoroughly cultured mind, and a highly qualified observation. This combination alone would suffice to single him out from ordinary travellers.

He was elected a fellow of Queen's College in 1727, while he was still in Algiers. In 1733 he returned finally to England, and proceeded the next year B.D. and D.D., and was presented to the vicarage of Godshill in the Isle of Wight. In the same year he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society. In 1738 he published the result of his travels and scholarly expeditions under the title of:

*Travels or Observations relating to several Parts of Barbary and the Levant*, Oxford, 1738.<sup>1</sup>

The book was received with particular esteem by the learned circles, and was regarded as an invaluable reference on natural history and antiquities.<sup>2</sup>

On the death of Dr. Henry Felton, Shaw was elected, on 18 August, 1740, principal of St. Edmund Hall, affiliated to Queen's College. He soon after married the widow of Mr. Holden, his friend and benefactor, who had offered him great assistance during his

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the quoted edition (A), there appeared the following:

(B) 2nd edition with figures, 4to, Oxford, 1757.

(C) 3rd edition corrected, with some account of the author, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1808.

*Translations:*

*French:*

(D) *Voyages dans plusieurs provinces de la Barbarie et du Levant, contenant des Observations géographiques, physiques, philologiques et mêlées sur les royaumes d'Alger et de Tunis, sur la Syrie, l'Egypte et l'Arabie Petrée, avec des figures et des cartes, traduites de l'Anglois.* 2 vols. 4to. The Hague, 1743.

*German:*

(E) *Reisen, oder Bemerkungen über verschiedene Theile der Barbarie und Levante betreffend. Nach der zweiten Englischen Ausgabe, übersetzt von J. H. Merk. Mit Kupfern und Karten.* 4to. Leipzig, 1765.

*Dutch:*

(F) *Reizen en aanmerkingen door en over Barbaryen en het Ooste, uit het Engelsch vertaald door P. Boddarta.* 2 Deelen. 4to. Utrecht, 1773.

I have used edition (A).

<sup>2</sup> Read the memoir of the *European Magazine and London Review*, vol. 19, 1791, p. 83.

African travels.<sup>1</sup> As principal of the Hall, he applied himself most assiduously to the repairing of that ancient building, which he restored and raised 'from a ruinous condition by his munificence', and was thus termed its 'instaurator.' On 7 November, 1741, Shaw was appointed regius professor of Greek, in succession to Dr. John Fanshaw, and in 1742 he was presented by his college to the vicarage of Bramley in Hampshire. He divided his days between academical duties and those of a parish priest. He died on 15 August, 1751, and was buried in Bramley Church, where a monument was erected to his memory with a long Latin inscription by his friend, Dr. Joseph Browne, fellow of Queen's College. A memorial tablet was erected in the English church at Algiers; and a botanical species received the name *Shawia* in his honour. He left to the university several natural curiosities, the manuscript of his travels with corrections, and some antique coins and busts. It seems that Shaw was rewarded more after his death than during his life-time, for the editor of the *European Magazine*, in the memoir, comments: "Well may the ingenious writer of his epitaph say *iniquo fato*; for who could avoid growing indignant, that no patron could be found to reward such great and conspicuous merit . . . I must add, the Royal Society did themselves the honour of electing him a member of their body."<sup>2</sup> Shaw's popularity and illustriousness in his day were not due to his distinguished qualities as a scholar only, but to his personal character too. He is described as having been 'good, humane, temperate, sociable, and cheerful to the highest degree, as long as any of his contemporaries exist, the infinite humour of his conversation will never be forgotten which was heightened by a peculiarity of figure and countenance . . .'<sup>3</sup>

Shaw was no political observer, but a scholar, antiquary, and natural historian. In this respect, he had a profound knowledge in the classical languages, as well as in Arabic, and, in natural history, was the 'best qualified of any man of his time to illustrate that branch of science' in his various tours in North Africa and the Holy

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<sup>1</sup> The DNB says that Shaw married about 1733, and it is stated in the *Eur. Mag.*, op. cit., p. 84, that the marriage took place about 1740. I think the latter date is more probable, since Shaw, in the preface to his first 1738 edition, mentions his friend Holden, without giving the impression that he was dead. See Shaw's account, pref., p. ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Eur. Mag.*, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> Ditto.

Land.<sup>1</sup> His book of travel is 'an essay towards restoring the ancient geography, and placing in a proper light the natural history of those countries, where the author has travelled,' and thus forming in the end a comparative geography between the state of those countries as he witnessed them, and what was written and known about them by the classic authors. He refers, therefore to a host of Greek, Roman, Syrian and Arab geographers and historians. The work is far more important for the discussion of Algeria and North Africa in general, than of Egypt and Syria. Since we are obliged to deal only with the material on the latter two areas, we inevitably deprive Shaw's account of its best quality, that of being mainly a reference on North Africa.

The portion on Syria is, therefore, less deliberate than that on North Africa. His journey must have been accomplished in a hurry, and under insecure conditions as is implied in the preface.<sup>2</sup> In the Holy Land, Shaw occupied himself in the study of vegetable life and curiosities of natural history, in addition to the description of what Maundrell had forgotten to describe the holy places. In Sinai Desert, his chief interest was to trace back and determine the route of the children of Israel as they left Egypt and followed Moses to Palestine. He affords us with nothing much about the Egypt of his day besides a scanty description of Cairo, Alexandria, Damietta and Rosetta. His main concern in the Land of the Nile was the study of the history of the ancient Egyptians: their religion, rituals, customs, mythology and the interpretation of the remains and their language and ornaments. He describes the Pyramids and the Sphinx, and discusses with much learning the original purpose of their building. His conjectures on this subject have been fully confirmed by the Italian explorer of Egyptian antiquities, Belzoni, and by other investigators.<sup>3</sup>

If we judge the value of the work from the social, historical, and political points of view, it can hardly be informative in this direction for that period of time. But it was especially esteemed on account of its illustrations of natural history, of classic authors,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> Shaw, preface, p. viii.

<sup>3</sup> Belzoni, *Narrative of the Operations and recent Discoveries within the Pyramids, Temples, Tombs, and Excavations in Egypt and Nubia, etc.*, 1820.

and of the scriptures. No less than 640 species of plants are described and listed at the end of his travels. He also gives interesting descriptions of many mammals, of insects (especially of the locust swarms), and even of fishes. His treatment of natural history is very interesting even for the layman, for he avoids dull and dry details.

Shaw was honorably excepted by Gibbon from the 'blind travellers (who) seldom possess any previous knowledge of the countries which they visit.'<sup>1</sup> His scrupulous fidelity was vindicated by James Bruce and by later African explorers. His accuracy was, however, impugned by Richard Pococke.<sup>2</sup> In answer to that the European Magazine states that "he had been very unnecessarily affected by an imbelles telum flung at him by the Rev. Richard Pococke, . . . well known by his travels into the East, a most worthy and respectable character, but in point of abilities much inferior to the author on whom he made the attack. The public may rejoice that the provocation was given; for to that, probably, was owing the production of more of our illustrious traveller's instructive pages.'<sup>3</sup> This is a hint at Shaw's *Supplement . . . wherein some objections lately made are fully considered and answered*, 1746, and *A further Vindication in a Letter to R. Clayton, Bishop of Clogher*, 1747.

### 3. Frederick Lewis Norden (1737)

It is no wonder to find this Danish traveller and artist included in the Dictionary of National Biography. He was one of the pioneers of Egyptology, and co-founder of the Egyptian Club in London, composed of gentlemen who had visited Egypt. He also volunteered to serve under the English flag, and was present at the siege of Carthage on 1 April, 1741, the same year when he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society.

Norden was born on 22 October, 1708 at Glückstadt in Holstein.<sup>4</sup> He was instructed in mathematics, ship-building, and drawing. His success, especially in drawing, attracted the attention of De Lerche grand master of the ceremonies, and this presented

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, New York, 1880, vol. ii, ch. xxiv, p. 671, n.

<sup>2</sup> The 1745 edition of the *Description of the East*, vol. II.

<sup>3</sup> *Eur. Mag.*, p. 84.

<sup>4</sup> DNB; preface of Norden's journal, based on information supplied by his brother and by his friend Commander De Roemeling; *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*,

him to Christian VI, king of Denmark, who made him second lieutenant and sent him abroad to study the construction of the galleys and rowing vessels of the Mediterranean. He made many tours of study in Holland, France and Italy.

While at Florence, where he was studying art, he was commanded in 1737 by Christian VI to make a journey of exploration in Egypt.

He reached Alexandria in June 1737, and proceeded to Cairo, where he fell sick and was unable to start his journey to Upper Egypt for several months. He reached Aswān, and, in an attempt to reach the second cataract, proceeded to Derr, where he was forced to return owing to the great dangers that awaited him, and the unbearable impositions of the greedy and intriguing Cashef Baram of Derr. He again reached Cairo on 21 Feb., 1738. During his stay in Egypt, Norden kept a journal of his travels, and made sketches and plans on the spot.

Three months later, Norden left Egypt and returned to Denmark, where he was promoted to the position of captain in the royal navy, and was made a member of the shipbuilding commission. In 1740 he made a visit to London, where he was warmly received by the Prince of Wales and by the remarkable scholars of the time. The next year he voluntarily served in the British navy, and, shortly after, was elected member of the Royal Society. While undertaking a short tour in France, he died in Paris from consumption on 22 Sept., 1742.

In 1741 Norden issued in London a folio volume of:

Drawings of some Ruins and Colossal Statues at Thebes in Egypt, with an Account of the same in a Letter to the Royal Society. London, 1741.<sup>1</sup>

His Egyptian journals and papers were translated from the Danish manuscripts into French by Des Roches de Parthenay, and published (after Norden's death) by the command of Christian VI, with the title: *Voyage d'Egypte et de Nubie*, 2 vols., Copenhagen, 1755. The same work found its way for the first time in the English language in the translation of Peter Templeman as:

*Travels in Egypt and Nubia*, 2 vols. London, 1757.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Another edition appeared in London in 1792.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the first English edition there appeared:

(B) 2nd edition, London, 1780.

(C) 3rd edition, London, 1792.



In his journal, Norden reveals a lower standard of classical learning than Pococke, but as an elaborate writer on Egypt, he exceeds him. However, Norden's complete ignorance of Arabic deprived him of many advantages, and prevented him from forming a better understanding of the country and its people. This ignorance shows itself in his inaccuracy in stating the names of the Egyptian towns and villages. The first volume contains no journal at all, but general notions on the country, its system of government and trade, together with detailed information about Alexandria and Cairo. The expositions are delivered in the form of explanations to the plates and drawings fixed at the end of the volume. In volume II, Norden attempts at a regular journal from Cairo to Derr and back, with occasional display of episodes with petty sheikhs and local potentates. In the description of the temples and monuments of Upper Egypt, he depends more on his drawings than on his written word.

#### 4. *Robert Wood (1749)*

*Route:* Beirut (1750) – Mount Lebanon – Damascus – Hassya (11 March 1751) – Sudūd – Hawwārīn – al-Qaryatāin – Palmyra (14 March) – Sudūd – Baalbek.

Wood's journey in the Near East was made from two main motives. In the first place there was that flourishing movement of dilettantism, of the study and appreciation of antiquities of ancient civilisations that contributed to the animation of the Society of Dilettanti. In the second place, Wood was driven by his desire to read 'the Iliad and Odyssey in the countries where Achilles fought, where Ulysses travelled, and where Homer sung.'<sup>1</sup> By touring and studying the world of the Homeric poetry, Wood thought of throwing new light on the genius and works of Homer—a tendency that was warmly welcomed by Herder, and by Goethe in his younger days.<sup>2</sup>

Wood was born at Riverstown Castle, near Trim in the Irish province Meath, about 1717.<sup>3</sup> There is no authentic information about his early education, but he is believed to have been entered

##### *German Translation of the English Copy:*

- (D) Beschreibung einer Reise durch Aegypten und Nubien, mit Anmerkungen Dr. Templemans, nach der englischen Ausgabe übersetzt und mit Vorbericht versehen von Joh. Esaias Steffens. 2 vols. Plates and maps. Breslau, 1779.

##### *French Translation:*

- (E) Voyage d'Égypte et de Nubie. Trad. de l'angl. par Henry et Breton. Paris, 1817. I have referred to the first edition (A).

<sup>1</sup> Essay on the Original Genius of Homer, London, 1775; Preface, p. V.

<sup>2</sup> Hecht, 19-20.

<sup>3</sup> DNB; Hecht, 19 ff; Gent. Mag., 1771, p. 426.

at Oxford, where he acquired a good knowledge in the classical languages and in antiquity. He was filled with the desire to visit, besides the scenes of the Trojan wars, the lands of the Scriptures and the ruins of antiquity in the Syrian desert. In the years 1742-3 he journeyed in a Venetian vessel visiting Greece, the Greek islands, Syria and Egypt. Six years later, in 1749, Wood undertook a second well-prepared journey to Greece with John Bouverie and James Dawkins, both graduates of Oxford, together with Borra, an Italian artist acting as their 'architect and draughtsman.' After spending some time in Rome, they went to Naples, where they embarked in the spring of 1750 in the ship sent to them from London. The ship 'brought from London a library, consisting chiefly of all the Greek historians and poets, some books of antiquities, and the best voyages writers, what mathematical instruments we thought necessary, and such things as might be proper presents for the Turkish grandees, or others . . . Architecture took out chief attention; and in this enquiry our expectations were more fully satisfied.'<sup>1</sup>

The expedition reached the Troades and made wide researches there, but lost Bouverie who died in Smyrna. The survivors proceeded touring 'most of the islands of the Archipelago, part of Greece in Europe, the Asiatic and European coasts of the Hellespont, Propontis and Bosphorus as far as the Black Sea, most of the inland parts of Asia Minor, Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, and Egypt.' Then they came to Athens in 1751, and found Revett and Stuart busy in studying its antiquities.<sup>2</sup> These artists were much encouraged and assisted by Dawkins and Wood, during their stay in Athens, and the former gave material help to the publication of the first volume of *The Antiquities of Athens*.<sup>3</sup> After a short while Wood and Dawkins made their celebrated visit to Palmyra between the 14th and 27th of March, 1751, and to Baalbek on 1 April. Wood's books that made these ruins famous seal his travels, and mark the beginning of a new activity which busied him the rest of his life, namely, politics and state affairs. In 1753 he published:

The Ruins of Palmyra, otherwise Tedmor in the Desert. London, 1753.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robert Wood, *The Ruins of Palmyra, etc.*, London, 1753, preface.

<sup>2</sup> See above pp. 91-2.

<sup>3</sup> Michaelis, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

<sup>4</sup> In addition to this first edition (A) there appeared in 1827 the second edition (B). In 1753 appeared a French translation (C). I have used the first edition (A).

In 1757 followed:

*The Ruins of Balbec, otherwise Heliopolis in Coelosyria.* London, 1757.<sup>1</sup>

In 1763 Wood was elected a member of the Society of Dilettanti, and since that time offered the society great services as an experienced, finely cultured and highly active member. Later on, he was able to organize and direct from London the subsequent expeditions of the society, which he had no time to undertake himself.

Wood became under-secretary of state in 1756, and held office under Pitt and his successors until Sept. 1763. Under a general warrant and the orders of Lord Halifax, he seized in 1763 the papers of the demagogue John Wilkes. But the latter brought an action of trespass against him, and a verdict was obtained for £ 1,000 sterling. 'His taste and ingenuity, 'says Walpole, 'recommended him to Pitt, but their association, through Pitt's haughtiness and Wood's pride, did not last long.' <sup>2</sup> However, he reappears in the time between 1768 and 1770 as under-secretary of state under Lord Weymouth. Through the influence of the Duke of Bridgewater, whom he had accompanied in 1753 as travelling companion on the grand tour, Wood sat from the general election of March 1761 until his death for the pocket-borough in Northamptonshire.

'His general behaviour was decent as became his dependent situation, but his nature was hot and veering to despotic.' <sup>3</sup> He showed considerable ability in managing the business of his office, and was hot and sharp in defending the ministry in the House of Commons. After a sudden illness he died on the 9th of Sept., 1771 at his house at Putney.

The first account in the English language on Palmyra had been given in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* of 1693 by a group of English merchants from Aleppo after a second successful visit to the ruins in 1691. Wood read this account and admired the veracity of the description that had been written 'with so much candour and regard to truth, that some errors occasioned by haste, and their not being acquainted with architecture and sculpture, deserve indulgence . . . However we may claim the merit of a more inquisitive examination into the ruins of Palmyra, the dis-

<sup>1</sup> Only edition.

<sup>2</sup> Walpole, *George III*, ed. Barker, I, p. 289. Cited by the DNB.

<sup>3</sup> Ditto;

covery of them is entirely due to the English factory at Aleppo.’<sup>1</sup>

In his work on Palmyra, Wood gives a historical survey of the Roman colony until the fall of Queen Zenobia, according to Pliny, Trebellius Pollio, and Benjamin Tudulensis, ‘an ignorant and superstitious Jew.’ He comments on Abulfida’s account of it, and states that the latter was ignorant of its Greek name and history calling it by the name of Tedmur. He criticises that the best succeeding writers on ancient geography, such as Castaldus and Ortelius, though acquainted with the history of Palmyra, could not recognize that it was Abulfida’s Tedmur.

From the ruins and inscriptions he gives the world the first scholarly account of the glorious Palmyra, and a magnificent set of plans and drawings, described with diligent detail, which have made his book the standard work on Palmyra ever since.

Wood’s book on Baalbek, in addition to being a research into the history of that ancient temple, is an attempt at the study of Syrian mythology. It represents part of Wood’s plan of travelling in the countries of ancient civilization to gain a better understanding and interpretation of their mythologies. As a traveller through those ‘antient seats of idolatry,’ he imagined he ‘could discover, in many of the deviations from the true object of worship, something in the climate, soil, or situation of each country, which had great influence in establishing its particular mode of superstition.’<sup>2</sup> The examination of the temple of Baalbek, and the considerations connected with it may be regarded as a preliminary step to Wood’s research in the Trojan area, in his attempt to study the original genius of Homer. In the last page of his preface to the *Ruins of Balbec*, Wood writes: “As superstition travelled northward, she changed her garb with her country, and the picturesque mixture of hill, vale, grove, and water, in Greece, gave birth to Oreades, Dryades, and Naiades, with all the varieties of that fanciful mythology, which only such a poet as Homer, in such a country as Greece, could have connected into that form and system, which poetry has ever since thought proper to adopt.

“We may add, as a further confirmation of our opinion, that this same mythology, examined on the spot where Homer wrote, has

<sup>1</sup> Wood, *The Ruins of Palmyra*, p. 14; William Halifax, *Philosophical Transactions*, 1693.

<sup>2</sup> p. 14.

several plausible and consistent circumstances, which are entirely local. Should health and leisure permit us to give the public that more classical part of our travels, through those countries which are most remarkable as the scenes of antient fable, we may illustrate by some instances what is here only hinted at . . .”<sup>1</sup>

This promise was realised after Wood’s death in the publication of his *Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer: with a Comparative View of the Ancient and Present State of the Troade*, London, 1775.

It is in this book that Wood was occasioned to set down some of his remarks and observations during his Egyptian and Syrian travels. In the books on Palmyra and Baalbek, Wood concentrates almost exclusively on the study and delineation of the ruins and remains of both places. But in his book on the original genius and poetry of Homer, Wood attempts to trace the areas where ‘Ulysses travelled’, and where Menelaus experienced his adventurous hours, in order to examine the truth of Homer’s geographical and ethno-logical information. In this connection he touches many points concerning the flow of the Nile, and the difficulty of navigating its mouth on the way up river to Cairo.<sup>2</sup> In Syria, he finds many characteristics among the Bedouins, which, according to him, remaining constant throughout the ages, very much correspond to Homer’s utterings on Oriental manners.<sup>3</sup> In Wood’s opinion, this fact verifies Homer’s characterization to a great extent, and speaks much for his veracity and precision.<sup>4</sup>

## 6. James Bruce (1765)

*Route:* Algiers (15 March, 1763) – Bona – Bizerta – Utica – Tunis – Tripoli (Libya) – Bangazi – Rhodes – Cyprus – Bidon – Tripol (Lebanon) – Byblos – Latakia – Antioch – Aleppo – Ĥamā – Ĥassia – Ĥaryatain – Palmyra – Baalbek – Tyre – Sidon (15 June, 1768) – Alexandria – Rosetta – Cairo – Girga – Dandara Faršūt – Luxor (Jan. 1769) – Aswān – Quşair – Giftin Islands – Island of Sadwān <sup>5</sup>) – Tor – Rās Muḥammad – Tīrān – Yanbu‘ – Jabal Şubh – Port Mastūra – Jabal Şarār – Marsa Ḍanab – Island of Haramil – Jidda – Island of Abulat – Ras el-‘Askar – Qunfuda – Sibṭ – Lohaya – Dahalak – Massāwa – Gondar (14 Feb., 1770)

<sup>1</sup> Ruins of Balbec, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Wood’s *Essay on Homer*, op. cit., pp. 108-15.

<sup>3</sup> Ditto.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 143-80.

<sup>5</sup> For the names of islands and orts in the Red Sea, see Andreas Allgemeiner Handatlas, Bielefeld u. Leipzig, 1924, maps 182 and 183: Nilländer und Rotes Meer.

James Bruce was born at Kinnaird, Stirlingshire, on 14 Dec.<sup>1</sup>, 1730. He received his early education at Harrow, and after an unsuccessful attempt at the study of law, he prepared himself for a life of travel and adventure. After the death of his wife in 1754, he visited Spain and Portugal under pretext of inspecting the vintage that belonged to her father. Two incidents took place during this visit and decided his future career. His intention to examine the manuscripts in the Escorial led him to study Arabic, which incidentally directed his attention to the study of ancient Abyssinian; and, having observed the unprotected condition of Ferrol, he submitted, upon the outbreak of hostilities with Spain, a proposition to the British Government for an attack upon the place. This attracted the attention of Lord Halifax, who offered him the consulate at Algiers, with a commission to examine the remains of ancient architecture described but not delineated by Shaw. Some hints as to the possibility of his extending his explorations to the Nile took the strongest hold upon his imagination, and to reach its source now became the main purpose of his life. To qualify himself yet further for this undertaking, he spent six months in Italy studying antiquities, and obtained the services of an accomplished draughtsman, a young Bolognese named Luigi Balugani.

Bruce arrived at Algiers on 15 March, 1763. The Algerine consulate was a post of danger and difficulty at all times, and Baba Ali, the dey to whom Bruce was accredited, was a man of great ferocity and impracticality. The two years and a quarter during which he held office passed in a series of disputes with the Algerine ruler, which frequently involved him in great danger, but in which he usually triumphed by his undeviating firmness. At length, in August 1765, finding that no assistant was likely to be given him, as had been previously arranged, he resigned his appointment, and departed on an archaeological tour through Barbary, fortified by the protection of the old dey, who secretly admired his spirit. He took from him letters of recommendation to the authorities in Tunis and Tripoli.

Bruce began his travels by touring Tunesia and Libya, visiting

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<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of National Biography; see also: Sykes, Sir Percy, *A History of Exploration from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, London, 1949, p. 228; Embacher, F., *op. cit.*, p. 52; Kiernan, R. H., *op. cit.*, pp. 104-105.

historical sites and places of classical interest. Off the sea port Bengazi, in Libya, he was shipwrecked, and robbed of all his instruments, manuscripts and drawings. But an old acquaintance, a French captain, took him on board his ship to Sidon. He made a Syrian tour visiting most of the remarkable cities, and, on his return to Sidon, received letters and very fine instruments sent from England and France, which encouraged him to leave Syria for Egypt and there explore the "origin of ancient civilization." According to his statement, the king of France Louis XV took care to send him a quadrant to measure the sources of the Nile, which he received in Alexandria on his arrival on 20 June, 1768.

Bruce explored upper Egypt as far as Aswan, and during his long stay in Cairo he was able to win the particular sympathy of Ali Bey, Egypt's dictator at the time.

On 5 April, 1769 Bruce left Quşair and sailed down the Red Sea on his private adventurous expedition to Abyssinia. This affords us with very interesting details on the Arabian Red Sea ports, and on Red Sea trade and navigation in general. At last he reached Gondar, the capital of Abyssinia, on 14 February, 1770, after a toilsome march, in which he experienced great difficulties from scantiness of provisions, the transport of his heavy instruments, and from altercations with petty chiefs on the road. In his march he witnessed the Abyssinian custom of eating raw meat cut from the living animal, which Bruce brought such undeserved discredit upon himself by relating in England, that its notoriety pursued him till the end of his life.

At the time of Bruce's arrival Abyssinia was in full anarchy. The post of ras or visier was filled by the aged Michael, governor of Tigré, "the Warwick of Abyssinia, who having assassinated one king and poisoned another was at the age of seventy-two ruling in the name of a third".<sup>1</sup> It was Bruce's business to conciliate this cruel, but straightforward and highly intelligent personage, as well as the titular king and royal family, and Fasil, the chieftain in whose jurisdiction lay the springs of the Blue Nile, which Bruce, mistaking for the actual source of the river, had made the goal of his efforts. Fasil happened to be in rebellion at the time, which

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<sup>1</sup> DNB.

increased the difficulties of the situation. "But Bruce, by physical strength and adroitness in many exercises, by presence of mind, by long experience in the East, by his very foibles of excessive self assertion and warmth of temper, was fitted beyond most men to overawe a barbarous people".<sup>1</sup>

After two years of risky activity in a country full of danger and sudden turns of fortune, and after enjoying an incredible position among the ruling class, Bruce left Gondar on 26 December, 1771, amid the benedictions and tears of his many friends, bearing with other treasures the chronicles of the Abyssinian kings and an apocryphal book of Enoch in the Ethiopic version, in which alone it is preserved. The next stage of his journey was to be Sinnar, the capital of Nubia, which he reached after four months' march through a densely wooded country infested with wild beasts, and after narrowly escaping assassination at the hands of the treacherous Shaikh of Atbara. After five months' disagreeable detention at Sinnar among "a horrid people, whose only occupations seem war and treason", he struck into the desert, and after incurring dreadful perils, most graphically described, from hunger, thirst, robbers, the Sumum, and moving pillars of sand, on 29 November, 1772 reached Aswan.

On his arrival in England, Bruce was met at first with great attention, but a reaction against him soon set in. His stories created a wave of violent discredit which he actually did not deserve. His dictatorial manner and disdain of self-vindication also told against him. After those hard-accomplished travels, no honour was conferred upon him in his own country, except the personal notice of the king. Deeply wounded, he retired to his estate in Scotland, which had greatly increased in value from the discovery of coal. The need of occupation after the death of his second wife in 1785, and the insistence of his friend, Darris Barrington, incited him to the publication in 1790 of:

Travels to Discover the Sources of the Nile, in the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773. Edinburgh, 1790.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ditto.

<sup>2</sup> Simultaneously with this edition (A) appeared another one in London, 5 vols., 4to. There also appeared:

(B) An edition with Life and Notes by A. Murray, 8 vols., with atlas, Edinburgh, 1790.

(C) The same abridged by Samuel Shaw, 8vo, London, 1790.

(D) 2nd edit. (official), enlarged with Life and Appendix, 7 vols., 8vo, Edinburgh, 1804.



Four years later, on 27 April, 1794, as he was hastening to the head of his staircase to hand a lady to her carriage, he missed his footing, pitched on his head, and never spoke again.

The composition of *The Travels* twelve years after Bruce's arrival in England was highly unfavourable to strict accuracy. Instead of fulfilling this task immediately after his return, he dictated his lengthy account to an amanuensis, without troubling himself to refer directly to the original journals, which resulted in many confusions of facts and dates, fortunately relating to things personal to Bruce himself, and thus in no way impairing the truth and value of his objective account.

But neither the publication of the book, nor the popularity it won among readers were able to eradicate the verdict already passed upon Bruce by literary coteries. Even in 1818, Hugh Murray showed his doubts as to the truth of Bruce's two journeys: from Badjoura up the Nile to Aswān, and from Luhaya to the straits of Bāb-el-Mandab; "both of which there is much reason to suspect, never were performed".<sup>1</sup> However, the vindication of Bruce's name was left to posterity, and his veracity was later established by Burton, Speke, and Baker.

His voluminous work includes a full narrative of his travels from the beginning, a valuable history of Abyssinia, and disquisitions on the history and religion of Egypt, Indian and Red Sea trade, the invention of the alphabet and a lot of minor remarks. However, it shows that Bruce was a great traveller, but not a great scholar or a judicious critic. In the words of the Dictionary of National Biography, "With all their faults, few books of equal compass are equally entertaining; and few such monuments exist of the energy and enterprise of a single traveller."

From the long account we learn much about Bruce's character

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*Translations:*

*French:*

- (E) Voyage aux sources du Nil, en Nubie et en Abyssinie, pendant les années 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771 et 1772. Traduit de l'anglois par J. H. Castéra, 5 vols. Maps and plates. 4to. Paris, 1790.

*German:*

- (F) Reisen zur Entdeckung der Quellen des Nils, in den Jahren 1768-1773. Aus dem Englischen übersetzt von J. J. Volkmann, und mit Zusätzen und Anmerkungen begleitet von J. F. Plumenbach und J. C. Tychsen. Maps & Plates. 5 vols. Leipzig, 1790-91. I have used the first edition (A).

<sup>1</sup> Hugh Murray, op. cit., vol. II, p. 96.

and imposing personality. In his carefulness to reveal his bravery, magnanimity and other excellent abilities, which he really possessed, he threw on himself a shade of boastfulness and thirst for fame, which contributed in injuring his veracity.

Commenting on his method of verbal composition without reference to the original journals, the DNB writes: "His method of composition, moreover, is unfavourable to the strictly historical, was advantageous to the other literary qualities of his work. Fresh from the author's lips, the tale comes with more vividness than if it had been compiled from journals; and scenes, characters, and situations are represented with more warmth and distinctness. Bruce's character portraits are masterly; and although the long conversations he records are evidently highly idealised, the essential truth is probably conveyed with as much precision as could have been attained by a verbatim report. Not the least of his gifts is an eminently robust and racy humour. He will always remain the poet, and his work the epic, of African travel."

#### 6. John Ledyard (1788)

The first explorer to be employed by the African Association was an American of unusual activity and adventurous nature. He was born at Groton in Connecticut, U.S.A., in 1751, and after an interrupted study of law and theology, he was urged by a deep desire to see the world, and set out as a sailor for the Mediterranean.<sup>1</sup> In London, he joined Captain Cook on his third expedition, in 1776, and witnessed his death on the return voyage in 1779, and arrived in London in 1780. Two years later, Ledyard deserted and returned to his family in Hartford. In 1783 he issued *A Journal of Captain Cook's last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*. During this expedition he began at Nootka Sound to picture the vast possibilities of the fur trade between the north-west coast of America and Canton. His efforts to win the support of some capitalists to realize his enterprise failed both in America and England. Nevertheless, he resolved to travel on foot across Siberia as a preliminary to his walk through America. He went to Hamburg, and by way of Norway, Sweden,

<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of National Biography; Dictionary of American Biography; Jared Sparks, *The Life of John Ledyard* (1828); H. A. Tirrell, "Ledyard the Traveller," *Records and Papers of the New London County Historical Society*, vol. iii, pt., ii (1912).

and Lapland reached St. Petersburg. At Yakutsk he was detained by the governor, but was able to return to Irkutsk, where he was arrested and thrown across the borders into Poland.

In London, 'disappointed, ragged and penniless, but with a whole heart,' he at once looked about for some new adventure. He waited immediately on Sir Joseph Banks who engaged him on behalf of the African Association to explore the sources of the Niger. At this interview, Banks was struck with the 'manliness of his person, the breadth of his chest, the openness of his countenance, and the inquietude of his eye.'<sup>1</sup>

After obtaining his instructions and letters of recommendation, Ledyard left London on the 30th of June, 1788,<sup>2</sup> and arrived in 36 days at Alexandria. In Cairo he arranged to accompany a caravan to the interior. But violent rage over the caravan delaying its departure brought on an illness which resulted in his death.

Ledyard was a man of great strength and activity. "Despising the accidental distinctions of society", as Murray writes of him, "he seemed to regard all men as his equals and his manners were not disagreeable, though unpolished. His uncultivated genius was original and comprehensive, not modelled by rule, but moulded by circumstance. From the native energy of his mind, he was adventurous and curious, and unappalled by dangers, but the strength of his judgment united caution with energy."<sup>3</sup>

During his stay in Cairo, Ledyard visited the slave-market, and contacted the travelling merchants of the caravans. From them he obtained plenty of information about the interior of Africa—its people, trade, routes and manners of travelling. His previous travels in America, the Pacific Ocean and Asia occasion him to make some comparisons between his observations in Egypt, and those of his earlier travels. The mummies are covered with the same wampum work that is common among the Tartars. Tattooing is as common among the Bedouins, as among the islanders of the South Sea. The way the women tattoo their chins is similar to that practised among the women of the north-west coast of America. There are many such attempts at finding similarities and parallels.

<sup>1</sup> Murray, II, p. 288.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto, Proceedings of the African Association, op. cit.; the Dictionary of American Biography, however, fixes his departure on the end of July.

<sup>3</sup> Murray, II, 288 ff.

The first account of his stay in Egypt was published in the:

Proceedings of the Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa. London, 1790.<sup>1</sup>

### 7. *W. G. Browne* (1792)

*Egyptian route:* Alexandria (10 January, 1792) – Siwah (in an attempt to penetrate to the temple of Jupiter Ammon) – Cairo – Asiūt – Manfalūt – Aḥmīm – Gırge – Faršūt – Dandara – Qina – Kous – Nagāda – Isna – Gabal el Silsili – Kom Ombo – Aswān – Qina – Quşair – Qina – Assiūt – Cairo – Fayyūm – Birket el Qurūn (Moeris) – (1 March, 1793 to Suez) – Tūr – Cairo – 21 April, 1793 left Cairo – Assiūt – (by the Sudan caravan to Charjé) – Beiris – Sab – Selimé – Bir el Mahla – Darfur (23 July) – Sweini – El Fasher – Asiūt (1796).

*Syrian route:* left Cairo to Dumiat on 2 Dec., 1796 – Jaffa – Rama – Jerusalem – Nāblus – Nazareth – Acre – Şūr – Saida – Kisrawān – Şaida – Beirut – ‘Aintūra – Ḥarişa – Tripoli – Latakia – Shawr – Qiftin – Aleppo – Anṭakia – Aleppo – Damaskus – Ḥomş – Aleppo – Constantinople – Wallachia – Vienna – Prague – Dresden – Leipzig – Potsdam – Berlin – Hamburg – London (16 Sept., 1798).

While the African Association was awaiting the results of Mungo Park's expedition to Western Africa, W. G. Browne, urged by curiosity and the spirit of adventure, privately endeavoured to traverse that continent from East to West. Though his plan could not be realized because of the great dangers he had to encounter, his adventure resulted in giving the world the first account of Darfur, a country entirely unknown to Europeans at his time.

Browne was born in London on the 25th of July, 1768.<sup>2</sup> After a private early education, he entered Oriel College, Oxford, where he found little encouragement and assistance in his academical studies, and was forced to strive diligently to educate himself by individual effort. The year he left Oxford (B.A. 1789), he was deeply stirred by the news of the French Revolution. On reading Bruce's travels and the first report of the African Association, his thoughts were captured by the idea of exploring Africa and determining various geographical positions, and of observing numerous important facts, both in manners and in commerce. As a traveller he enjoyed a good constitution, steadiness of purpose, much indifference to personal accommodations and enjoyments and a degree of patience "which could endure reverses and disappointments without murmuring". He had a fair classical education, and an elementary knowledge of chemistry, botany, and mineralogy.

<sup>1</sup> Another edition (B) 8vo appeared in London in 1791. I have referred to the first edition (A).

<sup>2</sup> Dictionary of National Biography; Murray, op. cit., vol. II.

After his arrival in Alexandria in 1792, he visited the ruins at Siwa, and pronounced them not to be the remains of the temple of Jupiter Ammon. He then proceeded to Cairo, where he studied Arabic and investigated the political and social condition of the country and explored the principal remains of Egyptian antiquity and the vast Roman quarries at Quşair on the Red Sea. Intending to penetrate into Abyssinia from Darfur, he accompanied the great Sudan caravan from Assiūt to the latter country which he reached after many hardships in July 1793. Soon after, he fell sick of dysentery, was robbed of most of his property and detained by the Sultan. The latter at last, fearing the results that might arise from this detention, particularly its effect on Darfurian trade in Cairo, permitted Browne to leave the country, and the latter returned to Cairo in 1796. He journeyed then in Syria and Asia Minor and returned to England in 1798, where two years later he published his:

*Travels in Africa, Egypt, and Syria, from the Year 1792 to 1798.* London 1800.<sup>1</sup>

The book was received unfavourably by the English public in spite of its veracity and merit of being the first account of Darfur filling up "a vacancy in the geography of Africa". This cold reception may be attributed to three main reasons: First, the defects in Browne's style. It reveals much affectedness and pedantry, and lacks that descriptive and imaginative power which is capable of capturing the readers' hearts. In the second place, Browne was obviously a republican in his political inclination and a free-thinker in his

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to this first edition (A), there appeared the following editions and translations:

(B) 2nd edition enlarged, London, 1806.

*Translations:*

*Dutch:*

(C) *Reize naar de binnenste gedeelten van Africa, door Egypte, Syrie, en le Dar-Four.* Plates. 2 vols. 8vo Amsterdam, 1800.

*French:*

(D) *Nouveau Voyage dans la Haute et Basse Egypte, la Syrie, le Darfur, où aucun Européen n'avait pénétré, fait depuis les années 1792 jusqu'en 1798 par W. G. Browne, contenant de détails curieux, sur diverses contrées de l'intérieur de l'Afrique, sur l'Anatolie, sur Constantinople et Paswas-Oglow, etc. Avec des Notes critiques sur les ouvrages de Savary et de Volney, traduit de l'Anglais sur le deuxième édition, par J. Castéra.* Maps and plates. Atlas. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1800.

*German:*

(E) *Reisen in Afrika, Aegypten, und Syrien in den Jahren 1792-98. Aus dem Englischen mit Anmerkungen des Uebersetzers.* Maps and plates. 8vo. Leipzig and Gera, 1800. Translated into German by M. C. Sprengel.

religious tendency. His ideas must have been strongly rejected by a conservative royalist public. Thirdly, the European public on the whole did not appreciate Browne's preference of many Oriental manners to those of "civilized" Europe. However, the book has its special value for the fresh information it gives about Nubia and Northern Sudan.

After two years of travel in Turkey and the Levant in general (1800-1802) Browne spent the next ten years in England keeping an intimate relation with scholars of his tastes, but on the whole leading the life of a recluse in London. In 1812 he again left England with the object of penetrating into Tartary by way of Persia. On his way from Tabriz to Teheran, in the summer of 1813, he was mysteriously murdered, and it remains a question whether the motive of the murder was plunder or oriental fanaticism.

His character was described in the Dictionary of National Biography as that of a grave and saturnine person, "with a demeanour," says Beloe, "precisely that of Turk of the better order." The DNB states further: "Beneath his reverse he concealed an ardent enthusiasm, his attachments were warm and durable, he acted from the highest principles of honour, and was capable of great generosity and kindness . . . His intellectual endowments were rather solid than shining, but he possessed in an eminent degree two of the traveller's most essential qualifications, exactness and veracity."

#### F. MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST NAPOLEON

The last group of our travellers is one of a military nature, and is connected with the British military operations against Napoleon's army in Egypt between 1798 and 1803. Long before Napoleon thought of invading Egypt, a series of French traders and diplomats, well acquainted with the Levant, had been intriguing against England and cherishing the desire to seize Egypt, the stronghold leading to the rich trade of India, and the key of communication between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.<sup>1</sup> The Corsican general, who was keen on directing an unerring blow at Britain's heart, thought of no better plan than the capture of the Levant, and the invasion of India, where France could avenge herself for lost

<sup>1</sup> Hoskins, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

colonies and found a greater empire of her own.<sup>1</sup> Napoleon, finding at the moment no chance of holding power in France, wished to be away; and the Directors, happy to keep him from the scene, approved at once of his Egyptian expedition.<sup>2</sup>

With the full ignorance of Britain as to the real purpose of France's military preparations, and to the astonishment of the world, Napoleon landed in Egypt and captured Alexandria in July, 1798.<sup>3</sup>

To win the natives to his side, he issued a proclamation calling on the "faithful" to rise against the Mamelukes. On the 5th he stormed Alexandria smashing every resistance. Two weeks later, he advanced towards Cairo, and routed the main Egyptian army near the Pyramids. On the 22nd he entered Cairo.<sup>4</sup>

After a heart-breaking search in the East Mediterranean, admiral Nelson discovered the French fleet at anchor in Aboukir Bay, at the mouth of the Nile. That historical encounter on the first of August, 1798, foretold the failure of the French expedition from the very beginning. The battle of the Nile brought on the French great losses. Their fleet was almost entirely destroyed or captured.<sup>5</sup>

This victory changed the attitude of the Porte towards the French. The Ottoman government resolved to resent the intrusion of the French into its territories and declared a Holy War against the French in Egypt. This resolution took a serious form after Napoleon's invasion of Syria in his attempt to escape from his enclosure in Egypt.<sup>6</sup> But his failure to conquer Acre, then fortified by Captain Sidney Smith and a French royalist engineer, the spread of epidemics among his troops, and the attacks of the Arabs of Palestine forced Napoleon to retreat to Egypt, and to leave his army there and escape secretly to France on August 21st.<sup>7</sup>

The Turks showed their readiness to co-operate with the British

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur Bryant, *The Years of Endurance, 1793-1802*, London, 1946, p. 230; Carola Oman, *Britain Against Napoleon*, London, 1942, pp. 95-6; Hoskins, 55; William James, *The Naval History of Great Britain*, in 6 vols., London, 1860, vol. ii, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Bryant, pp. 230-31; Oman, 96.

<sup>3</sup> James, ii, 175; Hoskins, 56; Bryant, 234. *The Oxford History of England* (edit. Sir George Clark): *The Reign of George III, 1760-1815*, by J. Steven Watson, Oxford, 1960, p. 378.

<sup>4</sup> Bryant, 245.

<sup>5</sup> *Oxford History of England*, op. cit., 379; Bryant, 255-6; Hoskins, 58.

<sup>6</sup> Bryant, 257; Oman, 97.

<sup>7</sup> Hoskins, 60; Oman, 98, Bryant; 268-9.

army to drive the common enemy out of the Ottoman territory. In April, 1799, a British military mission of artillery and engineer officers, under Brigadier-General Koehler sailed from England to Constantinople to organize the Turkish army. This mission accompanied the army of the Grand Visier in its march along the Syrian coast to Egypt, after the withdrawal of the French troops from Palestine. In December, 1800, General Sir Ralph Abercromby and Brigadier-General Moore sailed with 16,000 troops for Marmarice Bay in Asia Minor to co-operate with the Turkish authorities for a landing near Alexandria.<sup>1</sup> After the successful landing on the Egyptian shore on the 8th of March, 1801, the British army under Abercromby and Moore was able to capture the castle of Aboukir on the 18th, and to win on the 21st a decisive historical battle against the French army that had advanced from Cairo under General Menou.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year a combined military and naval force came out from India under General Sir David Baird to co-operate with Abercromby's forces that had landed from the Mediterranean. It landed at Qusair and other small ports on the Red Sea, and advanced from Upper Egypt towards Cairo. But before these forces could do any effective fighting, Abercromby's contingents had already taken Cairo in June and Alexandria in September.<sup>3</sup>

It is not our concern here to discuss the further events that took place after the British occupation of Egypt, and led to the rise of Mohammed Ali the Great, for that is a period lying outside the frame of this paper, and has its own landmarks and characteristics. I have given the foregoing historical introduction to lead the reader to the last group of Near Eastern travellers, who either were eye-witnesses of, or took active part in these military operations. Though these journals on the whole are of military character, either giving detailed descriptions of the battles in question, or of the manoeuvres of the British Navy and army, they still had something to say about the country and its condition prior to the rise of Mohammed Ali.

Both the French and British campaigns to Egypt had great and far-reaching significance. The French, with their army of archaeolo-

<sup>1</sup> Bryant, 313.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 330-31.

<sup>3</sup> Hoskins, 60.



gists and savants, disclosed to the world in full detail the secrets of ancient Egyptian civilization. Thanks to mere chance, an engineer officer called Boussard discovered somewhere near Rosetta a basalt stele inscribed in hieroglyphic, demotic and Greek, with a decree of the priests of Memphis, praising Ptolemy V, Epiphanes, and his wife, Cleopatra.<sup>1</sup> This gave a French savant the key for deciphering the hieroglyphics on Egyptian monuments and temples. France's *Description de l'Egypte* drew the curtain that separated Egypt from the eyes of the modern world.

The British victories in Egypt won them a fabulous renown for valour and military discipline, and the battle of the Nile became a myth of English patriotism.

A stream of poems and plays celebrating the battle followed shortly after the victory became known in England, and everything pertaining to Egypt or the Nile was in demand.<sup>2</sup> This inflamed the enthusiasm of the English public in the following years to visit Egypt and satiate their new-born curiosity about the land of the Pharaohs. What encouraged the succeeding movement of English travel to Egypt was the popularity that the English won gradually among the Egyptian Arabs. The French were looked upon as infidel invaders of the Moslem country, a fact which was emphasized by Napoleon's brutal massacres in Palestine and Aboukir. The English, on the other hand, were considered as emancipators, especially after their co-operation with the Turks.

The Napoleonic expedition and all its accompaniments and results opened a new era of intricate relations between the Near East and the West.

### 1. *Cooper Willyams* (1798)

This topographer and artist was born in June 1762 in Essex, and educated at the King's school, Canterbury.<sup>3</sup> He graduated from Emmanuel College B.A. in 1784, and M.A. in 1789. He became vicar of Exning, near Newmarket, in 1788, and rector of St. Peter, West Lynn, Norfolk, in 1793. Since his early youth Willyams had imbibed a love of the sea. He joined the expedition to the West

<sup>1</sup> Oman, 97.

<sup>2</sup> Oman, 87-9, Rushdy, op. cit., 44-5.

<sup>3</sup> Dictionary of National Biography.

Indies in 1793 as chaplain to the Boyne, and remained one of the few eye-witnesses to tell the story of the campaign.

Willyams became in 1797 domestic chaplain to Earl St. Vincent, and from 24 May, 1798, he served as chaplain of the *Swiftsure*, one of two vessels under the command of Nelson that were appointed to reconnoitre Alexandria before the battle of the Nile took place. He witnessed that renowned battle from its very outset until the glorious victory. In 1802 he published:

*A Voyage Up the Mediterranean in his Majesty's Ship the Swiftsure . . . etc.*, London, 1802.<sup>1</sup>

His journal mainly narrates the details of the battle, and has very little to tell about Egypt or Palestine. There are occasional remarks on Alexandria, Haifa and Acre, and some notions on the person and character of Al-Jazzār.

## 2. *William Wittman* (1800)

*Route*: Left England (April 1799) – Constantinople – Jaffa (2 July) – Ramleh – Jerusalem – Bethlehem – Jaffa (until 25 Feb., 1801) – Asdod – Migdal – ‘Asqalān – Ġaza – Khān Yūnus – Al‘Ariš – Mas‘ūdiyyah – Qanṭarah – Šālhiyah – Balbīs – Mastuleh – Šubra Šabbi – Baisūs – Cairo – Rosetta – Alexandria – Ma‘ādie – Cairo (until 19 Feb., 1802) – Rosetta – Alexandria (until 27 March, 1802) – Rhodes – Samos – Crete (Scio) – Constantinople – Varna – Galati – Rumania – Poland – Vienna – Germany – Holland – Harwich (21 July, 1802).

Wittman was surgeon to the British military mission that was sent under the command of Brigadier-General Koehler in April 1799 to organize the Turkish Army. This mission was composed of artillery and engineer officers, with detachments of royal artillery and royal military artificers. He kept a journal of the journey and drew pictures on the spot to illustrate his observations and remarks during the mission's residence near Constantinople and its short operations in Egypt which he entered with the Turkish army in 1801. The journal was published one year after Wittman's return to England as:

*Travels in Turkey, Asia Minor, Syria and across the Desert into Egypt during the Years 1799, 1800, and 1801.* London, 1803.<sup>2</sup>

The travels are written in the form of memoirs, and provide us with very authentic information about the visited countries and their time. Written by an unmilitary man, the journal may retain

<sup>1</sup> Only edition.

<sup>2</sup> Only edition.

some interest as an historical source for this period of Arab History both in Syria and Egypt. Though the mission did not take actual part in the battles fought against the French forces in Egypt, we still find interest in Wittman's account, especially in its survey of the traces and effects of the French campaign, and the social background in both countries during and after the campaign.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps nothing was more emphasized in the journal than the unpleasant picture of the Turkish army, with all its weaknesses, chaotic disposition, love of showy pomposity, and futility of action.<sup>2</sup> This was a painful experience for the British mission which found great difficulty in co-operating with their Turkish allies. Yet, "the patience, forbearance, and circumspection of the individuals engaged in this long and perilous service, were manifested on a variety of trying occasions, which required all the energy inherent in the British military character."<sup>3</sup>

While in Palestine, Wittman studied the land and its people. He discusses the climate of Syria, its fruits and crops, animals and means of transportation.<sup>4</sup> He finds the Syrians very active and alert, enduring work and toil for a long time. In this quality he likens them to the Indians of America. He describes their complexion and dress, which tend to fanciful decoration. In their diet they are very abstemious, living on very simple and poor kinds of food.

Of the Egyptian peasant, he lays particular stress on his extreme poverty and wretchedness, but in the defence of their country and national cause, the peasants lack no courage or boldness. Nevertheless, Wittman does not exempt the Arabs in general from being expert thieves, distinguished by consummate hypocrisy and treachery.<sup>5</sup>

The general poverty among the peasants whether in Syria or in Egypt was highly emphasized by the unlimited persecution and avarice of the ruling Turks. Mohammed Pasha, the greedy collector of the tributes, and the untiring resistance of the villages of Palestine are examples of this attitude.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wittman, pp. 128, 136, 151, 153, 294.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 10, 196, 198, 303.

<sup>3</sup> p. 396.

<sup>4</sup> pp. 211 ff.

<sup>5</sup> p. 219.

<sup>6</sup> p. 222.

But there are more pleasant pictures than this in Egypt. There are the public parades of Cairo, and the great jubilant occasion of the opening of *the canal of Cairo*, with all the associated ceremonies and festivities. There is also the joyous procession of the caravan to Mecca, with all its colours, decorations and details. Wittman affords us with the description of the nuptial procession which characterized the popular tradition of Cairo.<sup>1</sup>

In a chapter on the city of Cairo, Wittman tells us many things about the city and its people, about the citadel, the streets, construction of the houses, the interior and furniture of the houses, palaces of the beys, mosques and many other aspects of the city. Visiting the coffee-houses was a popular amusement; they were frequented by reciters of extemporaneous verses. Another amusement was the exhibition of the dancing girls (al-‘awālem العوالم), who attracted crowds of people in the squares, streets, and places of public resort.<sup>2</sup>

To conclude, one cannot expect more from a traveller whose journey was imposed upon him as a part of military duty, rather than the fulfilment of a personal desire, and a cherished inclination. Wittman's observations, therefore, are not those of a learned scholar with the eyes of a researcher, but, rather, those of an indifferent traveller. However, they are not devoid of entertainment, and historical information of the contemporary Syria and Egypt, that were Napoleon's great disappointment.

### 3. *Sir Robert Thomas Wilson* (1801)

This brilliant military figure was born in London in 1777. He was educated at Westminster school and Winchester College. In 1793 he enrolled as a cornet of the 15th light dragoons, and was one of eight officers commanding dragoons which routed superior French forces at Villiers-en-Couché, preventing the capture of Emperor Francis II in 1794. Six years later he received from the emperor the cross of the order of Maria Theresa, with the rank of baron of the holy Roman empire and of knighthood attached.

In 1794 Wilson became lieutenant, and in 1796 he purchased his troop. On 28 June, 1800, he purchased a majority in Hompesh's

<sup>1</sup> pp. 328, and 348-9.

<sup>2</sup> p. 376.

mounted riflemen and soon after joined Sir Ralph Abercromby in the Mediterranean. He landed at Aboukir Bay on 7 March, 1801, and took part in the action of the 13th and in the battle of Alexandria on the 21st, when Abercromby fell and was succeeded by Major-general Hutchinson, who employed Wilson on several missions. In July he entered Cairo with Hutchinson, was at the siege of Alexandria in August, and witnessed its capitulation on the 25th. Wilson left Egypt on 11 Sept. and returned to England via Malta and Toulon, arriving at the end of December. He was made a knight of the order of the Crescent of Turkey for his services in Egypt.

After many services and promotions in the Cape of Good Hope (1806), in Memel (1807), in Portugal as commandant of the Lusitanian Legion (1808-9), in Constantinople as Brigadier-general (1811), he became major-general in 1813, and general in 1841. He was made governor and commander-in-chief at Gibraltar from 1842 until his death in 1849.

In 1802 Wilson published:

The History of the British Expedition to Egypt, . . . to which is subjoined, a sketch of the present state of that country and its means of defence. London 1802.<sup>1</sup>

Wilson's work is of a military character mainly concerned with the operations of the army, and occasionally allowing some information about the country in general. However, he recognized the strategic and commercial importance of Egypt, and the necessity of England's winning the friendship of Turkey to oust French influence from the Porte.<sup>2</sup> This consciousness of the importance of Egypt, professed by Bruce long before Wilson, occasioned him to discuss the country's trade and give accounts of its main towns and ports. Other occasional remarks concern the Turkish army in comparison to that of the Mamelukes of Egypt, the diseases of Egypt and the characterization of the Capitan Pacha, the Grand Visier and the famous Rosetti, the Venetian consul, from whom many travellers obtained abundant information and material support.

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<sup>1</sup> Besides this first edition (A), there appeared:  
(B) 2nd edition London, 1803.

According to the DNB, the work went through several editions, and was translated into French in 1803 from the 2nd edition. I have used the first edition (A).

<sup>2</sup> Wilson, p. 240.

Wilson's account derives especial popularity from the charges of cruelty which it brought against Bonaparte both towards his Turkish prisoners at Jaffa (amounting to 3800) whom he annihilated completely, and his own sick soldiers (amounting to 580) whom he ordered to be poisoned by opium in the hospital of Jaffa.<sup>1</sup> Of these charges Napoleon complained to the British government, but, receiving no satisfaction, caused a counter report to be issued by his Colonel Sébastiani.

#### 4. *Thomas Walsh* (1801)

Captain Walsh of the 93rd Regiment of Foot took part in the landing and military operations of March 1801 in Egypt. He kept a regular journal of this period and all the happenings during his residence there. He published his book in 1803 under the title of:

*Journal of the late Campaign in Egypt: including Description of the Country, and of Gibraltar, Minorca, Malta, Marmorice, and Macri; with an Appendix; containing official Papers and Documents . . .* London 1803.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to being mainly a military record, the *Journal* is an attempt at the correction of some former prejudices about Egypt. It affords us with sound and practical information about various features of the country: the Nile, the general geography, the people, the most important towns and ports, the routes, together with a historical survey of the government of Egypt since its conquest by Sultan Selim the first.

#### 5. *C. B. Burr* (1801)

Captain Burr accompanied the Indian forces that joined the British army in Egypt, moving from India, across the Red Sea, and via Quşair to Cairo. Burr published an account of this episode in an article of eight pages as an extract from his journal in the *Asiatic Researches* of Calcutta in 1805, under the title of:

*Extract from a Journal, during the late Campaign in Egypt, in Asiatick Researches: or Transactions of the Society, instituted in Bengal, etc. vol. 8, Calcutta, 1805.*

The only thing worth mentioning in Burr's article is his description of the ruins of the temple of Isis in Dendera. The Indian soldiers present at the site of the ruins "beheld the scene before

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, pp. 72-5.

<sup>2</sup> Only edition.

them with a degree of admiration bordering on veneration; arising not only from the affinity they traced in several of the figures to their deities, but from their conviction of its being the work of some rajahs, who they conceived have visited the earth to transmit to an admiring posterity a testimony of supernatural talents.”<sup>1</sup>

#### 6. *William Richard Hamilton* (1808)

This outstanding antiquarian and diplomatist was born in London in 1777.<sup>2</sup> After studying at Harrow, Oxford and Cambridge, he began his public life in 1799 by becoming secretary to Lord Elgin when the latter was appointed Ambassador at Constantinople. He visited Egypt in 1801 on a diplomatic mission by order of Lord Elgin on the occasion of the French evacuation. He was able to seize the famous trilingual Rosetta stone, which the French had stealthily intended to ship to France. So an ironical fate decreed that this stone, which supplied a French savant with the key for deciphering Egyptian monuments, should become a valued exhibit of the British Museum.

Hamilton was under-secretary of state for foreign affairs from 1809 until 1822, when he became minister at the court of Naples, where he remained till 1825. In 1833 he was actively employed as one of the founders of the Royal Geographical Society, and in 1838, as a man of recognized taste in art and sound criticism, was appointed one of the trustees to the British Museum. He died in London on 11 July, 1859.

In 1809 Hamilton published in London his principal work:

*Remarks on Several Parts of Turkey*. Part I: *Aegyptiaca*, or Some Account of the Antient and Modern State of Egypt, as obtained in the years 1801, 1802, London, 1809.<sup>3</sup>

Of his projected work on “Several Parts of Turkey”, *Aegyptiaca* was the only part that saw the light of day, while the remaining parts of the design were never carried out. Hamilton’s work on Egypt, mainly on the antiquities and relics of Upper Egypt, is a scholarly research intended to supplement the works of Pococke,

<sup>1</sup> p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Dictionary of National Biography.

<sup>3</sup> Only edition.

Norden, Volney, Sonnini, Denon, and Wilson. The particular object of Hamilton's journey to Upper Egypt was "to collect some accurate details respecting those monuments of the power and grandeur of the antient Monarchy, which the climate and retired situation of Upper Egypt have left in better preservation than those of any other part of the antient Roman World."<sup>1</sup> In his work Hamilton reveals a high standard of classical learning, and antiquarians and historians may find plenty of instructive information about almost every place of interest on the Nile. His details on the great temple of Philae, near Aswān, attract our full interest and invite our imagination to take part in the enjoyment of those unsurpassed beauties. Referring to the sculptures on the interior of the great temple at Philae, he writes: "It is impossible to conceive a more magnificent scene than that which the whole assemblage of these painted sculptures, combined with the grand effect of the architecture, must have produced when perfect. It was in temples of this description that the Egyptian priests lavished their treasures, and that the Jews first learned to make the likeness of every thing that was in heaven and earth, or in the waters under the earth . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The most striking of the contents of the *Aegyptiaca* is Hamilton's transcript of the Greek copy of the decree given by the priests of Memphis, in praise of Epiphanes and his wife Cleopatra, that was inscribed on the famous trilingual stone of Rosetta, with an English translation of the decree.

### 7. *Edward Daniel Clarke* (1801-1802)

*Route:* England (20 May, 1799) – Denmark – Sweden – Lapland – Finland – Norway – Russia – Asia Minor – Rhodes – Rosetta (1801) – Cyprus – Acre – Šafa ‘Amr – the plain of Zabulon – Šaffūri – Nazareth – Cana – Turan – Sea of Galilee – Tiberias – Plain of Esdraelon – Jennin – Nāblus – Jerusalem – Bethlehem – Bisān – Rāma – Jaffa – Rosetta (July 31) – Foua – Cairo – Rosetta – Alexandria (departed 16 Sept., 1801) – Greek Islands – Constantinople – Austria – Germany – France – England (1802).

The last of this group of travellers, who either belonged to the British military forces in Egypt, or had some connection with them, is E. D. Clarke.<sup>3</sup>

Clarke was born at Willingdon, Sussex, on June 5, 1769, and

<sup>1</sup> Hamilton, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Dictionary of National Biography; William Otter, *Life and Remains of E. D. Clarke*, 2 vols. London, 1825; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; Chambers' *Encyclopaedia*; Embacher, *op. cit.*, p. 78.



educated at Cambridge, where he read a good deal of English poetry, history, numismatics and antiquities, and also made study of natural science, especially mineralogy. He graduated B.A. 1790, and M.A. 1794. From 1790 to 1799, he was employed as tutor and companion to various noblemen, travelling in England and Europe. In 1799 he set out on an extensive tour with his pupil, John Marten Cripps, a young man of considerable fortune, who allowed Clarke a salary during those travels. On 20 May 1799, they set out for the north of Europe, accompanied by the famous Malthus (the writer on population) and by William Otter, Clarke's lifelong friend and biographer. Clarke was so keen on these travels that he scarcely thought of sleep or rest, and, instead, was feverishly touring, observing and collecting minerals, plants, drawings and manuscripts. Malthus and Otter soon dropped off, but Clarke and Cripps pressed on. They traversed Scandinavia, Russia, Asia Minor, Palestine, Egypt and Greece. After the capitulation of Alexandria, Clarke was of considerable use in securing for England the statues, Sarcophagi, maps and manuscripts which had been collected by the members of the French Institute. He was personally commissioned by Hely-Hutchinson, British commander-in-chief at Alexandria, to negotiate with General Menou for the recapture of Egyptian antiquities in the hands of the French. He and Hamilton<sup>1</sup> received from the French the Rosetta Stone and Alexander's Sarcophagus, two prides of the British Museum at present. In February 1802 he was in Constantinople, whence he wrote home to say that he had seventy-six cases (and Cripps more than eighty) containing antiquities collected during his wanderings.<sup>2</sup> He did not return to England till the Autumn of the same year. In 1803 the university of Cambridge granted him the degree of LL.D., and in 1808 he was made first professor of mineralogy at the same university. He was ordained in 1805, and held the vicarage of Harlton and the rectory of Yeldham from 1809 until his death in 1822.

In 1810 Clarke published his:

*Travels in various Countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa, Cambridge, Broxbourne and London, 1810-23*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> DNB.

<sup>3</sup> The first edition (A) appeared in 3 parts and 6 volumes. Part I (1 vol.) printed at Cambridge, part II (3 vols.) at Broxbourne, and part III (2 vols.) at London.

What concerns us of Clarke's *Travels* are the volumes relating the account of his Palestinian and Egyptian wanderings. These are a small portion of vol. III, and vols. IV and V of the 1817 edition which I used. Clarke is very prolific, and there is hardly any geographical or historical place, whether in Palestine or Egypt, that was not discussed with detail and rich reference to classical and contemporary writers. He shows special reverence to Maundrell, and, in Palestine, he follows his route closely, using his small, but valuable, book as an inevitable guide and reference. Similarly, he consults Pococke and Shaw, especially concerning Egypt. In Palestine he visited the traditional holy places, which he describes with much reference to the Scriptures, and his account of the history of Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee and Samaria is of particular interest.<sup>1</sup> He is the second traveller after Maundrell who visited Nāblus and gave a good account of it.<sup>2</sup> Apart from an account of Jerusalem, the Holy Sepulchre, and the mosque of 'Umar (al-aqsa), Clarke describes the details of an interview which he had with Al-Jazzār, and his remarks on this dictator are not devoid of historical interest. In Egypt, he was fascinated by the pyramids, and his story of the ascension of the pyramid of Cheops, the first of its kind, is symptomatic for the new love of mountains and mountaineering in Europe. The historical effect of the discovery of the Rosetta stone shows itself for the first time in Clarke's remarks on the hieroglyphs. Thus, he is the first to recognize that this type of writing represents a language like any other one, and is not "symbolical" or "emblematic", as has been supposed. However, as the time of the decipherment had not come yet, Clarke is one with his predecessors, that the hieroglyphs were "sacred", and not the language of everyday life.

During his Egyptian wanderings, he was often in company with the Austrian orientalist Josef von Hammer-Purgstall, who dis-

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Other editions were:

- B. Parts I., II, and Section 1st of Part III. 5 vols, at Broxbourne and London, 1811-19. Parts I. and II. (4 vols.) at Broxbourne, part III. sect. I. (1 vol.) at London.
- C. Fourth edition (8 vols.), London, 1816-18.

D. *German Translation*:

Reise durch Russland und die Tartarei in den Jahren 1800-1801. Aus dem Englischen . . . übersetzt von P. C. Weyland. Weimar, 1817.

I have used edition (C) for this work.

<sup>1</sup> Clarke, IV., pp. 209-33.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. 268-80.

covered an Arabic manuscript on the hieroglyphs written by Abu Bakr Aḥmad bin Waḥshiya. Von Hammer translated it into English and published it in London in 1806.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of Clarke's lengthy passages and detailed accounts, his book remains pleasant reading even to-day.

### PART THREE

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS (BACKGROUND AND COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRAVEL BOOKS)

### A. SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT ISLAM AND ARABIC CULTURE IN ENGLAND UP TO THE 18TH CENTURY

A considerable number of our Near Eastern travellers already possessed a fairly good knowledge about the geography and history of the toured countries. Some of them (for instance, Pococke, Shaw, Bruce, Perry, Browne and Norden among others) must have read libraries on the geography, natural and ancient history, antiquities and religions of those lands of ancient civilization. In displaying their knowledge on Islamic history and religion, most of the travellers gave no reference to Arabic authors. But some, for example, Shaw, Pococke, Wood, Bruce and Clarke, referred to a few well known Arab authors. Shaw gave in his appendix a long excerpt in the Latin language from Al-Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿšā*, in connection with the Nile and the nilometer, which was used to measure the rise of the Nile before its inundation.<sup>2</sup> He referred to him in other places too.<sup>3</sup> He also refers to Abu'l-Fidā' in connection with the Nile and the location of the place where the Israelites

<sup>1</sup> Clarke, V., p. 119 footnote. Ibn Waḥshiya: Abū Bekr Aḥmed b. ʿAlī Al-Kaldānī or Al-Nabaṭī, a Nabatī scholar who lived about 800 and defended the old Nabatean culture in defiance of the Arabs. See *Encyklopaedie des Islam*. For Hammer-Purgstall see Johann Fück, op. cit., pp. 242 ff. Von Hammer's translation of the Arabic manuscript reads: Ancient Alphabets and Hieroglyphic Characters explained; with an Account of the Egyptian Priests, their Classes, Initiation, and Sacrifices, in the Arabic language, by Ahmad Bin Abubekr Bin Wahshih; and in English by Joseph Hammer, Secretary to the imperial legation at Constantinople. London, 1806. See Schnurrer's *Bibliotheca Arabica*, 1811, Nr. 431, p. 499.

<sup>2</sup> See Brockelmann's *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur*, Leiden, 1943, II, 166.

<sup>3</sup> Shaw, op. cit., pp. 349, 433-4, 436.

crossed the Red Sea.<sup>1</sup> Wood mentions Abu'l-Fidā' among the scholars who wrote on Palmyra.<sup>2</sup> Clarke seems to have read a good number of Arabic sources too. He refers to Abu'l-Fidā' in connection with Rama in Palestine.<sup>3</sup> In relation to Al-Ḥalij, the principal canal of Cairo, he gives reference to Al-Makīn,<sup>4</sup> who claims that 'Umar was its only builder.

The travellers in displaying their knowledge and erudition reveal varied standards of learning and classical background. From which sources did they get their information and general notions about the past and contemporary conditions of the Near East, and what was the background of their beliefs and conceptions about Islam and the Arabs? This chapter attempts to answer this question briefly.

The first contacts between Christian Europe and the Moslem world were based on pure animosity and bigotry, which were most exemplary in Spain. But the Crusades made Europeans recognize that the Holy Land could not be regained by the use of violence, and that the "heretic" doctrine of Islam must be studied to supplement a new approach, namely, missionary activity.

But the conflict between the Christian and Moslem worlds during the Crusades opened the eyes of the Europeans to the fact that Moslems had become the direct heirs of Greek medicine, philosophy and natural sciences. This gave the missionary fathers an impetus for the study of Arabic for a two-fold purpose: first, to have a channel to the sciences of antiquity, and second, to get acquainted with the Moslem creed to furnish themselves with better and more effective weapons against the "heretics". A considerable number of Oriental Christians, converts, and Spanish Musta'ribin contributed in this movement of translation from Arabic into Latin. This led to the first translation of the Koran into Latin in 1143 by an Englishman, Robertus Retensis, who, in spite of his knowledge of Arabic, was very inaccurate and insincere in his translation.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, his Latin translation of the Koran played

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, pp. 349 and 432.

<sup>2</sup> Wood, *The Ruins of Palmyra*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Clarke, IV, 434, footnote.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, V, 136-7, footnote.

<sup>5</sup> Fück, Johann: *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa vom 12. bis in den Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts*, in *Beiträge zur Arabistik Semitistik und Islamwissenschaft*, herausgegeben von Richard Hartmann und Helmuth Scheel, Leipzig, 1944, p. 92.

an important rôle for the next four centuries, and was used for an Italian translation in 1557, which in its turn led to a German one in 1616, and from the latter ensued the Dutch translation in 1641.<sup>1</sup>

The thirteenth century was marked by the undying efforts of the Italian Raymundus Lullus, who made it his life-long struggle to realize his plan of instituting training centres for the teaching of Arabic and Oriental languages to missionaries, who were to spread the 'word of God' as far as Tartary and the farther East. His efforts succeeded in 1311 when the general Council in Vienna decided in its 11th canon to appoint at each of the universities of Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Salamanca and the Curia, two Catholic fathers for each of the Greek, Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldean languages. The interest in these languages was neither of linguistic, literary nor historical nature, but purely of a practical character, as an auxiliary means for missionary activity. But this decision had little effect on the study of Arabic, which may be accounted for the failures that befell missionary work in the Moslem areas, and the spread of Islam nearly everywhere during the 14th century.<sup>2</sup>

According to Arberry, the first Englishman known for certain to have been a scholar of Arabic was Henry II's tutor, Adelard of Bath (12th century), who travelled widely in Spain and Syria and translated a number of Arabic texts into Latin.<sup>3</sup> Among other scholars who travelled in the Moslem world and returned to England 'to enlighten their fellow-country-men' were the astronomer Daniel of Morley (1170-1190), and Michael Scotos (1175?-1234?), astrologer and alchemist, whose translations of Aristotle from the Arabic were of special celebrity during the renaissance.<sup>4</sup>

So far the study of Arabic had been pursued for its subsidiary benefit, either as a key to ancient philosophy and science or a means to convince and convert. The 15th century was remarkable for two events of considerable importance for the relations between Europe and the Near East. In 1453 Constantinople fell into the hands of the

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. 100-105, also 109-111.

<sup>3</sup> Arberry, A. J.: *British Orientalists*, Collins, London, 1943, p. 12. However the Dictionary of National Biography doubts the claim of Adelard's profound knowledge of Greek and Arabic science and philosophy.

<sup>4</sup> Arberry, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14; DNB.

Moslem invaders, who began to threaten even the heart of Europe. Moslem influence spread all over the Balkan Peninsula and East Europe. The second event was the discovery by Vasco de Gama of the route round the Cape of Good Hope, which resulted in Portuguese, followed by English, Dutch and French settlements in and around India. The establishment of the Levant Company in the 16th and the East India Company in the 17th centuries, together with the search after shorter routes to India, brought England into contact with the Ottoman Empire and resulted in the establishment of a wide net of consular and diplomatic representation in Constantinople, Aleppo, Cairo and along the Syrian, Egyptian and Arabian coasts. All this called for 'finesse in statesmanship' and it was not uncommon for diplomatic representatives after long residence to have become familiar with the language and culture of the countries in which they represented the interests of their native land.<sup>1</sup>

The seventeenth century opens the first page in the history of modern English Orientalism, and the study of Arabic for the sake of its own intrinsic merits. Though the early studies and Oriental researches of this century were devoted to the field of theology, a necessity for the study of the Arabic language and literature expressed itself in the words of the Arabic scholar William Bedwell (d. 1632) who wrote of Arabic that it was "the only language of religion and the chief language of diplomacy and business from the Fortunate Isles to the China Seas."<sup>2</sup> To Bedwell the English owe the first version of the Koran in that language. An example of the British Orientalists' interest in Arabic for theological purposes is shown by the publication in 1657 of the 'English Polygot Bible', whose editor, Bryan Walton (1600?-1661), relied in finishing it on the joint efforts of a host of notable orientalist of the century, namely: 1. Edward Pococke (1604-1691), who was the first to occupy the chair of Arabic at Oxford, 2. Edmund Castell (1606-1674), who represented the same field at Cambridge, where he opened his academic teaching with lectures on the second book of Avecene's Canon, 3. Thomas Greaves (1612-1676), also professor

<sup>1</sup> Arberry, p. 14; on the English knowledge of Oriental learning cf. E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* I, 41-44.

<sup>2</sup> Arberry, p. 16.

of Arabic at Oxford, and brother to the astronomer and mathematician John Greaves (1602-1652), who edited in 1650 part of Abu'l Fidā's geography in Arabic and Latin translation, and who acquainted the West with the astronomical tables of Tūsi and Ulug Beg, and 4. John Lightfoot, Pococke's successor at Oxford.<sup>1</sup>

The most important Orientalist among these who gave a new colour to orientalism was Edward Pococke<sup>2</sup>. He studied theology at Oxford, and became chaplain to the English community at Aleppo, which gave him opportunity to learn Arabic thoroughly. In 1663 he became professor of Arabic at the Oxford University. In the next year he undertook another journey to the Orient with the main purpose of collecting Arabic manuscripts. Returning to Oxford, he resumed his chair for Arabic, together with the professorship of Hebrew, retaining both positions until his death. His edition of Tuḡrā'i's *Lāmiyat al'Aḡam* <sup>3</sup> and his commentaries on it show his thorough method of teaching Arabic, at the University, in which he aimed at teaching the beginners the nature and importance of the Arabic language and literature.<sup>4</sup> A more elaborate work which shows Pococke's laborious efforts and wide and deep knowledge of Arabic was his publication in 1650 of "*Specimen Historiae Arabum*" which was the first book to appear in Arabic print in Oxford.<sup>5</sup> It is foreworded by excerpts from the "*Universal History*" of Abu'l Faraḡ (Bar Hebraeus).<sup>6</sup> These few pages of Abu'l Faraḡ contain a few scanty notes derived from *Ṭabaqāt al-Umam* of Ibn Sa'īd, dealing with the pre-Islamic Arabs, together with a chronological list about the life of Muḥammed, with a short survey of the main Islamic sects and the four orthodox schools of law. But the real value of the book lies in Pococke's elaborate notes and commen-

<sup>1</sup> Fück, 170.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 171-2; DNB.

<sup>3</sup> *لامية العجم* Lamiato'l Ajam, Carmen Tograi, Poetae Arabis Doctissimi, una cum versione Latina, et notis praxin illius exhibentibus: opera Eduardi Pocockii, L. L. Hebr. et Arab. Profess. Accessit Tractatus de Prosodia Arabica. Oxonii, 1661, quoted from Fück, p. 171.

<sup>4</sup> Fück, ditto.

<sup>5</sup> *ملع من أخبار العرب* Specimen historiae Arabum, sive Gregorii Abul Farajii Malatiensis, de origine et moribus Arabum succincta narratio, in linguam latinam conversa, notisque e probatissimis apud ipsos authoribus, fusius illustrata. Opera et studio Eduardi Pocockii, linguarum hebr. et arab. in Acad. Oxon. prof. Oxoniae 1650, copied from Fück, p. 172.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-'Ibrī, *Muḥṭaşar ta'rīḥ ad-dual*, edited by A. Salhani, Beyrouth, 1890, p. 158-68; quoted from Fück, p. 172.

taries on Arabian history, science, literature, and religion, based upon prolonged researches in over a hundred Arabic manuscripts (especially excerpts from Ġazālī, Šahrastānī and Iḡī), and forming an epoch in the development of Arabic studies. All later orientalist, from Reland and Ockley to S. de Sacy, have borne their testimony to the immense erudition and sound scholarship of this remarkable work.<sup>1</sup> In 1663 appeared the long expected full edition of Muḥtaṣar Tārīḥ ad-duwal by Abu'l-Faraġ Gregorius (Bar Hebraeus).<sup>2</sup> Pococke's son, also bearing the father's name, published in 1671 (with a preface by his father) Ibn Ṭufail's *Risālat Ḥaiy ibn Yaqzān*, with an Arabic text and Latin translation.<sup>3</sup>

This new trend in Orientalism, namely, to separate Arabic studies from the field of theology, and to begin a new approach, free from prejudices and fanatical emotions, showed its appearance in France too, which occasions us to mention two important orientalist that exercised a far-reaching influence on Englishmen of thought and letters. The first was Bartholomé d'Herbelot (1625-1695) who had studied besides the classical languages and philosophy, Hebrew, Syrian, Chaldæan, Arabic, Persian and Turkish. His "Bibliothèque Orientale"<sup>4</sup> was a great accomplishment, and in spite of its inevitable mistakes, was something similar to the modern *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Although it could not reflex a comprehensive picture of the Orient, it contained, however, a host of information about the history and literature of the Islamic world, and offered both the learned and the layman rich and highly interesting instruction. It remained one of the main references on the Orient in England for over two centuries.

The second French orientalist who deserves mention here was Antoine Galland (1646-1715) who had undertaken the printing of d'Herbelot's first edition of the "Bibliothèque Orientale". Galland interests us here mainly for his translation of the *Thousand and*

<sup>1</sup> Fück, p. 173; DNB.

<sup>2</sup> *Historia compendiosa Dynastiarum auctore Gregorio Abul Farajio . . . arabice edita, et latine versa ab Ed. Pocockio*. Oxoniae 1663; quoted from Fück, p. 174.

<sup>3</sup> *Philosophus Autodidactus, sive Epistola Abi Jaafar Ebn Tophail de Hai Ebn Yokdhan, in qua ostenditur quomodo ex inferiorum contemplatione ad superiorum notitiam ratio humana ascendere possit. Ex arabica in linguam Latinam versa ab Eduardo Pocockio A. M. Aedis Christi alumno*. Oxonii 1671; Fück, p. 174.

<sup>4</sup> First published in Paris in 1697, 2 years after D'Herbelot's death, as folio of 1060 pages; Fück, p. 183.



One Nights, in 12 volumes, between 1704 and 1717.<sup>1</sup> This book of fantastic popular tales revealed the Orient and its people to the eyes of Europeans under new colours. Galland translated less than a quarter of all tales, but incorporated a number of Persian, Turkish and Arabic stories that were known to him. He also allowed himself the freedom to make some changes, adapt the tales to Western conditions, and even omit certain parts which he thought could injure the taste of European civilization. This Misrepresentation of the Orient was criticized by two later English translators of the tales, who preferred to be true to the actual atmosphere of the *Nights*. Edward William Lane criticized him for sacrificing, in a great measure, 'What is most valuable in original work . . . the accuracy in respect to those peculiarities which distinguish the Arabs from every other nation, not only of the West, but also of the East.'<sup>2</sup> John Payne, another translator of the Tales, says: "It is much to be regretted that the French translator should have thought himself entitled to deal with the original text in a manner which in the present day, more strict upon the question of fidelity and local colouring, would certainly have been visited with the severest reprobation!"<sup>3</sup> However, Galland was the pioneer in this respect, and his French copy was soon translated into English and German, and was most warmly received by the reading circles in Europe. This unusual success contributed to the fact that civilized Europe changed its outlook and attitude towards the Orient, and saw in it a world of eternal blue skies, with its colorful life, abundant wealth, Caliphs, Wazirs, Kâdis, harems, princes, fairies and ginnies, Wizards and Dervishes, in brief, a world full of fantastic adventures and unusual characteristics, rather than that of heretics and unbelievers.<sup>4</sup>

The exact date of the first publication of the English translation is not known. The fourth edition appeared in London, 1713-1715.<sup>5</sup> During the 18th and 19th centuries further translations appeared,

<sup>1</sup> Les mille et une nuits, contes arabes, traduits en français par A. Galland. Paris, 1704-17.

<sup>2</sup> E. W. Lane, The Thousand and One Nights (1839-41), preface, vol. I., p. viii, quoted from Anis, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> John Payne, The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night; its History and Character. London, 1884, quoted from Marie de Meester, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Fück, p. 185, De Meester, pp. 14-15.

<sup>5</sup> De Meester, p. 11.

and a growing interest was shown in the history and origin of the tales. Some new manuscripts were found and translated by German and English scholars, and the Arabic stories began to exercise a far-reaching influence on Western literature.<sup>1</sup> A great number of English travellers to the Near East considered it a necessity to read the Arabian Nights Entertainments, before setting on a tour in the Arab world. It was to many of them the easiest channel from which they could form an idea about the Arabs, their manners, and daily life.<sup>2</sup>

One of the heirs of Edward Pococke's new school of Orientalism and himself a prominent orientalist at his time was Simon Ockley (1678-1720). He was Hebrew lecturer at Cambridge, and later, in 1711 became professor of Arabic at the same university. In the first book he published,<sup>3</sup> he exhorted the 'juventus academica' to devote its attention to oriental literature, both for its own merits, and also for the aid which it supplies towards the proper study of divinity.<sup>4</sup> He also issued an English translation of Ibn Ṭufail's *Risālat Ḥaiy ibn Yaqzān*, which had been edited in Arabic and Latin by E. Pococke, the son, in 1671.<sup>5</sup> The dedication of this translation to E. Pococke, 'the worthy son of so great a father,' shows one source of his enthusiasm for oriental learning, and his belief in the new course of modern orientalism.<sup>6</sup>

But Ockley's fame rests solely on his *History of the Saracens*.<sup>7</sup> It dealt with 'The Conquest of Syria, Persia, and Egypt by the Saracens,' and was based upon a manuscript in the Bodleian Library ascribed to Al-Wāqidi, probably 'Futūḥ eš-Šām, with additions from El-Mekin, Abul-Fidā', Abu'l Farağ and others. Imitating Pococke's famous 'Specimen Historiae Arabum,' but adopting a popular method, and using a more attractive style, Ockley for the first time made the history of the early Moḥammedan conquests interesting

<sup>1</sup> Ditto.

<sup>2</sup> An example is James Capper who advises his reader "by all means to peruse these Arabian Nights Entertainments before you set out on your journey". Capper, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Simon Ockley, *Introductio ad linguas orientales*, Cambridge, 1706.

<sup>4</sup> DNB.

<sup>5</sup> Ockley, *The Improvement of Human Reason*, exhibited in the Life of Hai ebn Yokdhan, London, 1708.

<sup>6</sup> DNB.

<sup>7</sup> The first volume appeared in 1708; the second, bringing the history down to A.D. 705 (A.H. 86), did not appear till 1718.

to the general reader, and, in spite of its inaccuracies. The History of the Saracens became a secondary classic, and formed for generations, the main source of the average notions of early Moḥammedan history.<sup>1</sup>

A very important contribution to the Arabic studies in England in the 18th century was the edition of Sale's translation of the Koran. George Sale (1697?-1736) was a lawyer, and devoted his free time to the study of Arabic. This led him to make the most celebrated translation of the Koran, from the original Arabic text, with occasional reference to Marraccis's Latin Version.<sup>2</sup> To the latter's commentary he owed most of his Arabic quotations. Sale's translation<sup>3</sup> is characterized by its sober clearness, which aimed mainly at displaying the contents of the text in the clearest manner possible. Throughout he has made full use of native commentators, as regards both the interpretation of the text and its illustration in the notes. Despite a few errors, his version was the best in any language.<sup>4</sup> Sale's preliminary discourse and notes display a remarkable acquaintance not only with the works of European writers upon Islam and its history, but also with native Arab literature. The preface and notes are still reckoned among the best sources of information with regard to the faith of Islam and the Moslem peoples.<sup>5</sup>

At the time of the revival of Arabic studies in England during the 18th century, the whole area of the Near East 'constituted a religious and cultural and, to a considerable extent, political unity, and there was the closest interpenetration of the three chief literary languages of Islam: Persian was the court-language of the Moghuls of India and the medium of polite intercourse in Turkey, Turkish was spoken widely throughout the Ottoman empire; Arabic was carried by missionaries and traders from Morocco to Zanzibar, from Syria to Java and beyond.'<sup>6</sup> The pursuit of Islamic studies, therefore, demanded the knowledge of all three languages together, and an orientalist who studied one of the three cultures was led to

<sup>1</sup> DNB.

<sup>2</sup> Fück, p. 188; Arberry, p. 16; DNB.

<sup>3</sup> The Koran commonly called Alcoran of Mohammed: translated into English immediately from the original Arabic, with explanatory notes taken from the most approved commentators to which is prefixed a preliminary discourse by George Sale, London, 1734.

<sup>4</sup> DNB. For new translations see WI, N. S., IX, p. 271 (Ed.)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Arberry, p. 16.

study them all. The most brilliant figure of this period, who established for Orientalism a tradition of its own was Sir William Jones (1746-1794). From his early youth he had a great liking for the study of languages, and the reading of the Arabian Nights inflamed his interest in the Orient. During his study years at Oxford he learned Arabic, Persian and Turkish by himself.<sup>1</sup> In 1768 he translated an eastern manuscript containing the Life of Nadir Shah, when he was the only person in England who knew enough Persian to perform this task.<sup>2</sup> In 1774 his reputation as an oriental scholar was definitely established by the publication of his "Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri Sex". Jones had begun this work when he was 21 years of age, which was suggested to him by Lowth's famous 'Praelections on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews.'<sup>3</sup> It contains mainly an exposition of Islamic poetry and metrical system. It deals with the 16 Arabic metres, the Qaṣīde and the Ġasel, together with the figures of speech and means of style, the poetical genres, with scanty details on Arabic, Persian and Turkish poets, and, finally, a chapter on the exalted, the flowery and the simple style. As a product of the Age of Reason, this work exercised, on its appearance, an unprecedented influence. It gave for the first time a survey of the Islamic poetry, conveyed the first specimen of Firdausi's Šah-nāme, and pointed emphatically to Hafiz. It also gave a general view of the whole field of Arabic poetry from the *Mu'allaqāt* and *Bānat Su'ādu*, across Abu Nuwās, Ibn Mu'tazz and Abu'l-'Alā', right to Ibn Fāriḍ and other poets of the post-classical age. The book opened the way for the aesthetic appreciation of Arabic poetry, which reached its climax during the 19th century Romantic Revival.<sup>4</sup>

In 1782 appeared the translation of the *Mu'allaqāt*, the seven Arabic poems, that had been suspended in the Ka'bah at Mecca. In 1783 Jones was appointed as judge of the high court at Calcutta. But the most important event from the point of view of orientalism followed in the next year. Jones, together with a group of orientlists, founded in 1784 the Asiatic Society (of Bengal), the first

<sup>1</sup> Fück, 214-19; DNB.; De Meester, pp. 6-8; G. Cannon, Oriental Jones. A Biography of Sir William Jones, 1746 - 1794. London, 1964.

<sup>2</sup> De Meester, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Fück, 215; DNB.

<sup>4</sup> Fück, pp. 216-17.

scientific society, with the sole purpose of undertaking scientific research work in oriental matters. His contributions to the society's 'Asiatic Researches' constitute an era in the study of the Indian languages, literature, and philosophy.

Jones exercised an unusual influence on the educated circles in England during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Many works and papers have proved his deep influence on a host of poets and literary figures, and even on public opinion and general culture.<sup>1</sup>

From the above survey, we find that Arabic studies in England, up to the 18th century, dealt mainly with classical Arabic culture, and had nothing to say about the life and people of the contemporary Arab areas. It was left for travellers, traders, missionaries and diplomats to fill this gap properly. However, our travellers of the 18th century contributed very little in this respect. There were many factors that stood in the way of better contact and better understanding. Mistrust and religious bigotry were prevalent among both parties. The incessant belief among the Arabs that the Franks who passed through their country were either of immense wealth, or had come in search of treasures among the ruins of antiquity, or had been roaming around to make plans for a subsequent Christian conquest, caused them to be either aggressive or extremely suspicious. Travellers of note who had some kind of letter or *Firmān*, contacted the ruling Turkish class—a Pasha, a Bey, or a janissary—and were kept almost cut off from the real inhabitants of the countries visited. That may explain the inability of those travellers to convey a solid and vivid picture of the Arab people and their life and manners, and their reliance, instead, on the general information of the classical authorities of Greece and Rome, and the heritage of Islamic studies that the orientalist had left behind. The only source on popular Arab life upon which most travellers drew, and which they consulted as the best means to understand the prevailing conditions in the Arab world was the book of the Arabian Nights. In fact the Nights did not represent the real life of the Arab world of the 18th century, with its misery,

<sup>1</sup> For example, M. de Meester; E. Shelley: Queen Mab and Sir W. Jones' Palace of Fortune, in *English Studies*, p. 43; R. M. Hewitt, Harmonious Jones, in *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, vol. xxv, iii, 1942; quoted from Anis, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

ignorance and backward conditions under the government of despotic rulers. The Nights were colorful, jolly and full of fantastic beauty that captures the imagination at once; its characters and people are happy ones, and even when poor, are optimistic and good natured. Moreover, Galland's translation was itself a misrepresentation of the real Nights, and was more adapted to the taste of 'civilized' Europe, and the first English translation of Galland's version (Publisher Bell) is again full of things and descriptions far from the truth. The toured Near Eastern countries, however, delivered a different picture: that of vast regions suffering heavily under the burden of a corrupt system, so that the scenes of misery fill countless pages of the travellers's journals. This naturally lead to a bitter disappointment, and the travellers busied themselves more with the description of the ancient history of those countries and that of the remaining ruins of antiquity.

Moreover, the travellers were mostly prejudiced against the people, and, instead of trying to sympathize with them and understand the conditions that were inflicted upon them, many of them wished, as a solution, to turn these areas into European colonies and to subdue Egypt, for instance, to the might of the British crown. It was the spirit of the age, and the product of Britain's singular position as mistress of the seas. But we still find another tone, harmonious with the democracy of the French Revolution, and in concert with the idea of brotherhood of nations and justice for all. This was the voice that W. G. Browne raised in the last chapter of his *Travels* in which he attempted to draw comparisons between Eastern and European manners and ways of life.<sup>1</sup>

The events that accompanied Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, and the British counter-expedition to that country, together with the rise of Mohammed Ali the Great, brought this area more to the foreground, and a new stream of English and European travellers were to tell a more interesting story of the Near East.

#### B. STRONG DEPENDENCE ON CLASSICAL AUTHORITIES

If we consider the whole body of our travellers, we shall find that almost all of them wrote in an impersonal, detached and matter-of-

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Browne's chapter on the "Comparative View of Oriental and European Manners", pp. 509-35.

fact manner. With the exception of Pitts, Aaron Hill, Evers, Campbell, Bruce, Browne and Wittman, we can hardly discern the character and personalities of the travellers through their travel-accounts. The majority of the travellers had little interest in the people and contemporary conditions of the areas visited; and if there happen to be remarks on this subject, they are dispersed at random, and have to be gathered with labour.

In the main, the travellers, apart from traders, residents, and travellers to India, toured the Near East from two main motives: a growing amateur interest in antiquarianism, which showed itself in the study of Egyptian and Syrian antiquities, and a desire to tour the lands associated with the Holy Bible. They saw, therefore, every place and corner of the Near East through the eyes of classical and biblical authorities. This close attachment to classical geographers, historians and travellers is, therefore, a typical characteristic among them. They were either keen on making a parade of their knowledge, locating their whereabouts in connection with places of historical or biblical renown, or comparing and correcting the information of ancient writers. To verify their discoveries and the truth of their observations, they loaded their books with footnotes and references, sometimes exceeding the subject matter itself.<sup>1</sup> It is this impersonal character of the 18th century travellers that makes them rather boring reading to-day. It is, again, the personal vitality and imposing power that shine throughout Bruce's *Travels* that gave them a special place among imaginative poets and writers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. However, those erudite travellers, such as Veryard, Shaw, Pococke and Perry, supplied generations of readers with almost first-hand information about the visited areas. Their erudition and matter-of-factness appear in conformity with the spirit of the century, and their impersonality and detachment were results of two separate worlds lacking contact and mutual understanding, the one at the acme of its social luxury and comfort, and the other lying breathless under the yoke of foreign oppression and ignorant government.

To give an example representing this group of travellers, it may be sufficient to name Thomas Shaw. In his travels he aimed at

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<sup>1</sup> An example is Thompson, whose editor attempted to prove the veracity of the travels, which, in my opinion, never took place.

"restoring the antient geography, and placing in a proper light the natural history of those countries . . ." <sup>1</sup> Shaw was not, like other travellers of the same group, satisfied with merely referring to the classical authors, but rather quoted their words in full, almost at each place of reference. "The excerpta particularly from antient authors," he writes, "will certainly plead for themselves, as they give the reader, in one view, all that was known to the antients".<sup>2</sup> As to the geographical observations which he gathered during his travels in Syria and Egypt, he comments:

Whenever . . . I had occasion to call in the authority of the ancients, I have always done it by way of note, in the express words of the author. For books of this kind being in few persons hands, the reference alone, without the words referred to, must frequently have excited a curiosity that could not be gratified, and consequently would have been of little service to the reader.

The same reason may be urged for the variety of notes and quotations, that are occasionally made use of, in the miscellaneous parts of these observations. For as it was necessary to produce such evidence and authority, so the quotations themselves can hardly be thought superfluous.

. . . The reader will be . . . pleased to put a favourable construction, upon the less entertaining paragraphs, that may too often occur in the course of the geographical observations. The nature of the subject . . . would not permit them to be otherwise; and in this, we have both the authority and example of Strabo, Ptolemy, and other antient geographers.<sup>3</sup>

These erudite travellers were interested in four main fields:

1. The ancient and contemporary geography of the Near East;
2. The history of the Holy Land;
3. The Hellenic antiquities of Palmyra and Baalbek;
- and 4. The study of the hieroglyphs and Egyptian antiquities.

In discussing each of the four fields, they referred to particular classical authors pertaining to that particular field, though some classical writers were commonly quoted in all four fields. Thus Strabo (64 B.C.-after 21 A.D.), Pliny (61-79 A.D.) and Ptolemy (90-168 A.D.) are the outstanding figures for the ancient geography of the Near East. They have been often consulted by Veryard, Maundrell, Shaw, Pococke, Perry, Hamilton and Clarke. Most copious reference has been made to Strabo's *Geographica*, especially by Shaw, Pococke and Hamilton. The latter occasionally criticises Pliny's inaccuracy and dependence on hearsay evidence.<sup>4</sup> However, much reliance has been made on Pliny's

<sup>1</sup> Shaw, *op. cit.*, preface, p. 1

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, xiii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, xiv.

<sup>4</sup> Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 117.



*Historia Naturalis*, in dealing with the natural history of the Near East.

Flavius Josephus (38-100 A.D.) is the main authority for the history of the Holy Land among the travellers who visited Syria and Palestine.<sup>1</sup> Clarke, who had particular interest in the history of Galilee and Judaea draws heavily on Josephus, who played a significant rôle in Galilee during the Jewish revolution (66-70), and whose writings, all in Greek, are the main source for the history of Judaea in the first century A.D.

As to the exploration of Palmyra and Baalbek, the main work, especially on Palmyra, was carried on by Robert Wood. Baalbek was also described by other travellers, but their scope is far shorter than that of Wood<sup>2</sup>. The latter refers to Pliny's description of Palmyra as the only source 'we have from the antients'.<sup>3</sup> For information about Zenobia he refers to Trebellius Pollio (4th century A.D.) a name which has created some doubts about its veracity,<sup>4</sup> and pretended to be one of the authors of the *Historia Augusta*.<sup>5</sup> In regard to the temple of Baalbek, Wood quotes Ioannes Malalas (491?-578 A.D.) as 'the first and only historical authority we have discovered, with regard to the building of those temples'.<sup>6</sup> The Chronicles (the Chronicaon Paschale) form the second source of information about the *history* of the temple.<sup>7</sup>

The last field of interest that demanded the travellers' strong dependence on classical authors is the study of the hieroglyphs and Egyptian monuments. There is one notion common among almost all travellers who visited Egypt, which is inherited from the classical tradition, namely, that Egypt 'was antiently esteemed the nursery of all sciences, from which Greek men of thought learned natural sciences and other sciences'.<sup>8</sup> To Aaron Hill, it is '... Egypt, from whose source of wisdom, Greece originally drew those channels,

<sup>1</sup> Mostly quoted by Maundrell, Veryard and Clarke.

<sup>2</sup> Such travellers were: Veryard, Maundrell, Shaw, Pococke, and Perry.

<sup>3</sup> Wood's Ruins of Palmyra, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Hohl Klio identifies him with Vopiscus. See Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft, Reihe 2, 6, Stuttgart, 1936, p. 2266; also Stuttgart, 1912, 8, p. 2058, under *Historia Augusta*.

<sup>5</sup> Ditto.

<sup>6</sup> Wood's Ruins of Balbeck, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>8</sup> Veryard, p. 308.

from whose unexhausted store she afterwards supplied the spacious universe; Egypt, the neglected mother of our arts and sciences . . .'<sup>1</sup> The same idea is also expressed among others by Shaw,<sup>2</sup> Montague,<sup>3</sup> and Pococke.<sup>4</sup> It was from Greek authors and Greek writings that this idea has been derived. From the classical heritage succeeding generations knew that the Greeks had fallen under certain Egyptian influence, and that Greek artists and scholars visited Egypt to learn and study.<sup>5</sup> From the earliest contacts, Egypt and its culture were sources of fascination and interest for the Greeks. In the words of Iversen, "The discovery of an age-old civilization, indisputably developed independently of all Hellenic traditions and far away from Hellenic shores, puzzled and intrigued them, because what they learnt about it was hardly compatible with their general conceptions of foreigners (*barbario*), and conflicted with their often somewhat insular confidence in their own cultural supremacy",<sup>6</sup> As the 18th century travellers in their treatises on the hieroglyphs and Egyptian mythology abundantly depend on classical writers, and as their notions on these subjects and their method of interpretation do not fundamentally deviate from the line of the classical tradition, it may be necessary to say a few words on the classical way of understanding and explaining the Egyptian mentality and the Egyptian hieroglyphs.

In spite of the early Greco-Egyptian contacts, there was a fundamental Greek misunderstanding of Egyptian mentality and way of thinking, which is responsible for the Greek misinterpretation of the Egyptian hieroglyphs that was inherited and handed over from generation to generation right to the end of the 18th century, when the Rosetta stone appeared to revolutionize the whole tradition. In his attempt to explain the reasons for this misunderstanding, Iversen mentions two main points which I have attempted, as far as possible, to put in his own words. First, 'there was a basic and fundamental difference in the Egyptian and the Greek concep-

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<sup>1</sup> Hill, p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 338 f.

<sup>3</sup> P. 411.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 228 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Erik Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt and its Hieroglyphs in European Tradition*, Copenhagen, 1961, p. 38.

<sup>6</sup> Ditto.

tions of the phenomena and their nature', where the former 'followed different courses from the latter in their efforts to explain them.' Due to the Egyptian 'all-pervading belief in the magical nature of things, and in magic as a basic and ever active force of nature', the Egyptians formed 'an entirely different conception of the dynamic processes of the cosmos'.<sup>1</sup> In spite of the sound empirical reasoning of the Egyptians, 'the dynamic force which originated any process, was in their conception always magical in its nature' a belief which 'influenced the very chain of their reasoning and made it dependent on laws of logic which are incompatible with ours and those of the post-Platonic Greeks from which we have inherited them'.<sup>2</sup> The second reason, according to Iversen which accentuated the Greek misunderstanding of Egyptian ways of thinking, and which was another peculiarity of Egyptian thought, was 'its reluctance to form and use abstract concepts, and its characteristic use of concretions, that is tangible concrete words and pictures, to express what we should consider abstract notions and ideas, which again resulted in its dependence on concrete mythical representations in all efforts to form and express a theoretical conception of the nature of things'.<sup>3</sup> Thus to the Egyptian mind, all material things and creatures had mythical existence, and were revealed only as mythical manifestations, which they tried to explain in their appropriate narratives and legends.

This rich heritage of mythical Egyptian theology became the background of all 'theoretical' Egyptian thought and reasoning, and the truth, to this way of reasoning, remained always a concrete mythical truth, never, 'as with the Greeks and ourselves, a scientific or philosophical one, based on empirical observations and logic deductions'. This way of reasoning left no possibility for 'the development of an independent logic and empiric science in our sense of the word'.<sup>4</sup> Now how did the Greeks understand and interpret this way of reasoning typical to the Egyptians?

Even the post-Aristotelian Greeks found it a difficult task to understand and explain the Egyptian mentality. But in their

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto.

<sup>3</sup> Ditto.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

attempt to conceive and express in their own tongue the Egyptian conceptions of religious and philosophic problems, 'they had to translate them into the terms of their own logic, and this process invariably involved an interpretation, based on utterly un-Egyptian premises'.<sup>1</sup> The essential misunderstanding of the whole classical tradition of Egyptian mythology lay in the Platonic and post-Socratic belief that the relationship between myth and reality was of a symbolic and allegorical nature. It is this symbolic relationship that dominated the whole European tradition of the hieroglyphs right to the time of the decipherment. Again, to quote Iverson's own words: '... The establishment of this symbolic relationship was a fundamental misinterpretation of the very basis of Egyptian thought, and substituted the mythical truth of the Egyptians, with its indissoluble magical identification of myth and matter, by an utterly un-Egyptian interpretation created by Greek philosophy and poetry...' <sup>2</sup> The fatal results of this false interpretation are nowhere better shown than in the classical hieroglyphic tradition on which generations of writers depended. It will be sufficient to quote a few passages from Shaw to illustrate the travellers' interpretation of the hieroglyphs and their dependence on the classical authors in this respect. Commenting on Egyptian learning Shaw writes:

Their symbolical learning alone, either as it was conveyed in sculpture, upon their obelisks &c. or in colours, upon the walls of their cryptae, mummy-chests, boxes for their sacred animals &c. appears not to have been known in Greece... yet Diodorus in particular, in conjunction with Porphyry, Clemens Alexandrinus, and other authors, hath obliged us with the description and interpretation of the most remarkable of them. But still, as a proper and faithful key is wanting to the whole science, the purport and design of any simple specimen of it, must, of course, remain a secret, or be, at least, exceedingly dubious, uncertain, and obscure.<sup>3</sup>

A little further he writes:

Now, from what is presumed to be already known of this symbolical learning, it is supposed, that the Egyptians chiefly committed to it, such things as regarded the beings and attributes of their gods; the sacrifices and adorations that were to be offered to them; the concatenation of the different classes of beings; the doctrine of the elements, and of the good and bad Daemons, that were imagined to influence and direct them. These again were represented by such particular animals, plants, instruments &c. as they supposed, or had actually found, by a long course of observations, to be emblematic of, or to bear some typical, or physical relation to them. Every portion therefore of

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<sup>1</sup> Ditto.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto.

<sup>3</sup> Shaw, p. 391.

this sacred writing, may be presumed to carry along with it some points of doctrine, relating to the theology or physicks of the Egyptians; for history doth not seem capable of being delivered in such expressions.<sup>1</sup>

The last sentence is typical of the inherited way of classical interpretation and idea of the hieroglyphs. In order to give a few instances of this 'mystical science', Shaw began 'with such of their sacred animals as were symbolical of their two principal deities, Osiris and Isis; who are the same with Bachus and Ceres; the Sun and the Moon; and the male and female parts of nature'.<sup>2</sup> Then follows the interpretation of a series of the Egyptian 'sacred animals', with much reference to Plutarch, Porphyry, Clement of Alexandria, Plotinus, Macrobius, Horapollon and Diodorus Siculus. It was Plotinus who declared that the Egyptians had contrived a method by means of which they could write with distinct pictures of material objects, which were "not merely ordinary images of the things they represented, but were endowed with certain symbolic qualities (*sophia*), by means of which they revealed to the initiated contemplator a profound insight into the very essence and substance of things, and an intuitive understanding of their transcendental origin, an insight which was not the result of reasoning or mental reflection, but was acquired spontaneously by means of divine inspiration and illumination. As artistic representations of the phenomenal objects, they revealed, in fact, the ideal world of the soul".<sup>3</sup> Shaw's interpretation of the 'symbolical' meaning hidden behind the Egyptian pictures of the serpent, the beetle, the hawk, the wolf, etc., is a continuation of the Greek hieroglyphic tradition that was not interested in the Egyptian writing at all, but was based on the 'Platonic' interpretation of the 'relation between sign and meaning in Egyptian hieroglyphs'. Hence grew 'the idea of the existence of a true symbolic system of writing in which abstract notions and ideas could be expressed by means of concrete pictures of material objects'.<sup>4</sup>

Besides the influence of the classical authors, the travellers' treatises on the hieroglyphs and Egyptian mythology were also influenced by the writings of two prominent figures that dominated

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 392.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto.

<sup>3</sup> Iversen, pp. 45-6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 49.

with their Egyptological studies the 17th and 18th centuries, i.e., the German Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680) and the English theologian William Warburton (1698-1779). Though all the travellers who visited Egypt generally admitted that the decipherment was a hopeless task, they greatly depended on the researches of those two scholars. While Veryard and Shaw, for example, adapted Kircher's theories, Pococke's account of the hieroglyphs was directly based on Warburton. Shaw's discussion of the symbols representing Osiris and Isis, as quoted above, and his frequent quotations from Kircher betray his great dependence on the latter. In Kircher's attempt to prove the timeless universality of the eternal truth underlying all religions and philosophic systems, and to demonstrate the basic religious conformity between the Egyptian, the Greek, and his own cosmological conceptions,<sup>1</sup> he plunged into the Neo-Platonic and Hermetic literature. To him, the Egyptians had considered Osiris the centre of the world, or the King of Heaven, which astrologically seen was identified with the sun. Isis was the principal emanation of the corresponding female principle called the Queen of Heaven, and identified with the moon. "All other Gods and Goddesses of the celestial hierarchy were considered corresponding emanations of lower orders, and each God, demon, and spirit had its own immutable position in the universe, corresponding to the fixed positions of the planets and the Stars. As manifestations of the same central force they were all united, but each had its particular cosmological functions and represented specific cosmic forces".<sup>2</sup>

Two years before the publication of Pococke's first edition of *A Description of the East*, there appeared Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses* in 1741, in which he displayed the results of his hieroglyphic studies and researches. The influence of his theories and conclusions is shown in Pococke's account of the hieroglyphs and Egyptian mythology. By that time Warburton had come to a new and original discovery which contradicted the ever repeated idea of the sacred and secret nature of the hieroglyphs. "For he

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<sup>1</sup> "The conceptions of a God-centered universe, dominated by a timeless emanation of divine truth, pervading it as an elementary dynamic force". Iversen, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. 94-5; compare Shaw, pp. 392 ff.

propounded that it was no sacred invention at all, 'made to conceal sacred secrets, as have been hitherto thought', but a practical device made for practical purposes."<sup>1</sup> This was a new step away from the 'emblematic', 'symbolic', 'decorative' or 'sacred' nature of the hieroglyphs, and nearer to the recognition that it was an ordinary language for ordinary, every-day purposes.

Even Clarke's account and interpretation of the hieroglyphs, though it reveals an awareness of the new discoveries that the Rosetta stone was still to bring, was, to a large extent, based on classical authors, and still spoke of "the sacred writing of the priests of Egypt."<sup>2</sup> The time of the Swede Åkerblad, the Englishman Young and the Frenchman Champollion was still to come.

#### C. THE USE OF NEAR EASTERN TRAVEL FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES AND OF HOMER'S POETRY

It has been mentioned in the preceding chapter that one of the main motives that led a large number of travellers to tour the Near East was a deep-rooted desire to study and observe the lands associated with the Holy Bible. The belief already obtained from previous travellers to this area, that the land and its people had scarcely changed their character and state since biblical times, made many a traveller hold the Bible in his hands and draw endless comparisons, referring to geographical places, cities famed for some historical event, or pointing to some biblical customs or manners still extant in Palestine or Egypt.

The almost passionate inclination to tour the Holy Land with the purpose of throwing new light on the Scriptures was, to a great extent, inflamed by a book that enjoyed wide influence throughout the second half of the 18th century. Robert Lowth (1710-1787) has shown in his *Praelectiones de Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*,<sup>3</sup> that the most touching pictures and similes of the Hebrew poetry could be borrowed only from the Holy Land and its surroundings, from the dominating religion and the daily manners and ways of life of the local

<sup>1</sup> Iversen, p. 104

<sup>2</sup> Clarke, V, pp. 36, and 143-58.

<sup>3</sup> London, 1753. The book was edited several times, and translated into German with notes by J. D. Michaelis, Göttingen, 1763.

people.<sup>1</sup> Lowth, in accordance with the growing realization that true and genuine art does not grow in stiff artificiality, but rather in the simple truth of nature,<sup>2</sup> aimed in his lectures on Hebrew poetry at the emphatic demand to learn how to understand and interpret the poetical language of the Bible under the circumstances and characteristics of the original land where this poetry developed, and where the manners and ways of life of the surrounding people were still preserved.<sup>3</sup>

Thus there grew a strong tendency to make use of Near Eastern tours and observations to throw new light on some ambiguities in the Scriptures, to identify biblical geographical names and locate them in the toured lands, or attempt to define the scenes of some biblical events, such as the route of the Israelites on their departure from Egypt to Palestine. Some travellers, as Maundrell for example, even showed that the Bible requires historical interpretation, and is not above textual criticism. Thus, on visiting Nāblus, he tried to locate the two mountains of Gerizim and Ebal between which the city lies. Here he says:

Upon one of these mountains also it was that God commanded the children of Israel to set up great stones, plastered over and inscribed with the body of their law; and to erect an altar and to offer sacrifices, feasting, and rejoicing before the Lord, Deut. 27. 4. But now whether Gerizim or Ebal was the place appointed for this solemnity, there is some cause to doubt. The Hebrew Pentateuch, and ours from it, assigns Mount Ebal for this use; but the Samaritan asserts it to be Gerizim.

Our company halting a little while at Naplosa, I had an opportunity to go and visit the chief priest of the Samaritans, in order to discourse with him, about this and some other difficulties occurring in the Pentateuch . . .

As for the difference between the Hebrew and Samaritan copy, Deut. 27. 4. before cited; the priest pretended the Jews had maliciously alter'd their text, out of odium to the Samaritans; putting for Gerizim, Ebal, upon no other account, but only because the Samaritans worshipped in the former mountain, which they would have, for that reason, not to be the true place appointed by God for his worship and sacrifice. To confirm this, he pleaded that Ebal was the mountain of cursing, Deut. 11.29 and in its own nature an unpleasant place: but on the contrary Gerizim was the mountain of blessing by God's own appointment, and also in itself fertile and delightful; from whence he inferred a probability that this latter must have been the true mountain, appointed for those religious festivals, Deut. 27. 4., and not (as the Jews have corruptly written it) Hebal. We observed that to be, in some measure true which he pleaded concerning the nature of both mountains . . . The Samaritan priest could not say that any of those great stones, which God directed Joshua to set up, were now to be seen in Mount Gerizim, which, were they now extant, would determine the question clearly on his side.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hermann Hettner, *Literaturgeschichte des Achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Braunschweig, 1894, p. 410.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 409.

<sup>3</sup> Hecht, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Maundrell, *op. cit.*, the 1740 edition, pp. 60-61.



If there be any corruption in the text of the Scripture, what will remain then for a Christian reader and observer to believe in? However, four pages following, Maundrell gives his own explanation to justify faith in the Biblical text:

All along this day's travel from Kane Leban to Beer, and also as far as we could see round, the country discover'd quite a different face from what it had before; presenting nothing to the view in most places, but naked rocks, mountains, and precipices. At sight of which, pilgrims are apt to be much astonished and baulked in their expectations; finding that country in so an inhospitable condition, concerning whose pleasantness and plenty they had before form'd in their minds such high ideas from the description given of it, in the word of God: insomuch that it almost startles their faith, when they reflect, how it could be possible, for a land like this, to supply food for so prodigious a number of inhabitants, as are said to have been polled in the twelve tribes at one time; the sum given in by Joab, 2 Sam. 24, amounting to no less than thirteen hundred thousand fighting men, besides women and children. But it is certain that any man, who is not a little biass'd to infidelity before, may see, as he passes along, arguments enough to support his faith against such scruples.

For it is obvious for any one to observe, that these rocks and hills, must have been anciently cover'd with earth, and cultivated, and made to contribute to the maintenance of the inhabitants, no less than if the country had been all plain: nay perhaps much more; forasmuch as such a mountainous and uneven surface affords a larger space of ground for cultivation, than this country would amount to, if it were all reduced to a perfect level.<sup>1</sup>

The natives and various friars of the Holy Land made a living from the pilgrimages of Europeans, and competed among themselves in showing the travellers every corner of land connected with biblical times and events. But the travellers varied in their willingness to believe everything fresh from hearsay. Maundrell was particularly critical in this respect, whereas Pococke was less prone to investigate the extent of truth behind those stories. The following passages drawn from Maundrell and Pococke and describing almost the same area, may illustrate this point. Thus Maundrell writes:

The next place we went to see was the grot of the Blessed Virgin. It is within thirty or forty yards of the convent; and is revered upon the account of a tradition, that the blessed Virgin here hid herself and her divine Babe from the fury of Herod, for some time before their departure into Egypt. The grot is hollowed into a chalky rock: but this witness they will have to be not natural, but to have been occasioned by some miraculous drops of the blessed Virgin's milk, which fell from her breast while she was suckling the Holy Infant. And so much are they possess'd with this opinion, that they believe the chalk of this grotto has a miraculous virtue for encreasing women's milk. And I was assured from many hands, that it is very frequently taken by the women hereabouts, as well Turks and Arabs as Christians, for that purpose, and that with very good effect; which perhaps may be true enough, it being well known how much fancy is wont to do in things of this nature.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, pp. 64-5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 91.

### On descending the Mount of Olives he describes the surroundings:

Near the bottom of the hill is a great stone, upon which you are told, the Blessed Virgin let fall her girdle after her assumption, in order to convince St. Thomas, who, they say, was troubled with a fit of his old incredulity upon this occasion. There is still to be seen a small winding channel upon the stone, which they will have to be the impression made by the girdle when it fell, and to be left for the conviction of all such as shall suspect the truth of their story of the assumption.<sup>1</sup>

### Pococke writes on this occasion:

Passing over the bridge, and going to the left, we came by a descent of several steps down to the sepulchre of the blessed virgin . . . Below they shew the sepulchres of Anna, Joachim, and Joseph, as well as that of the blessed virgin . . . We returned into the valley, and on the east, adjoining to this, we came to the grotto in which our Saviour was in an agony, on account of his approaching sufferings. To the south, at the foot of mount Olivet, is the garden of Gethsemane in which there are seven old olive trees, said to have been there in our Saviour's time. A little above this, in the road up the mount of Olives, is the stone on which they say the blessed virgin's girdle fell at her ascension, and left an impression.

Going along the foot of mount Olivet to the south, there is a stone where the disciples slept, while Christ prayed. A little further they say he was betrayed by Judas. We came to another bridge over the brook Kedron, where it is said Christ was thrown down as they were leading him to the magistrate: And beyond it, near the bed of the brook, is a stone on which they shew the print of his feet, supposed to be made as they were thrusting him along . . .<sup>2</sup>

There was hardly any place left in the Holy Land which was not explored as to its connection with the Bible, or used to explain and illustrate some Scriptural text. Thus Maundrell tries to search for Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis, 14. 10) in the surroundings of the Dead Sea.<sup>3</sup> Shaw attempts to locate the boundaries of the Biblical tribes: Issachar, Benjamin, Judah, Dan, Reuben etc.<sup>4</sup>, and the sources of the Biblical river Kishon occupied Maundrell, Shaw, Pococke and Clarke. Maundrell noticed that the bank of the Jordan "is so beset with bushes and trees, such as tamarisk, willows, oleanders, &c. that you can see no water till you have made your way thro' them. In this thicket anciently (and the same is reported of it at this day) several sorts of wild beasts were wont to harbour themselves. Whose being washed out of the Covert by the over-flowings of the river, gave occasion to that allusion, Jerem. 49. 19 and 50. 44: 'He shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan'." <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> Pococke, op. cit., vol. ii, pt. i, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Maundrell, p. 83.

<sup>4</sup> Shaw, op. cit., pp. 332-6.

<sup>5</sup> Maundrell, p. 82.

Much use was made of the travel observations also to confirm Biblical remarks on Oriental manners and way of life. Shaw, Pococke, Evers and others were reminded, on encountering the Bedouin Arabs, of the Biblical saying about Ishmael and his descendents: "His hand will be against everyman, and everyman's hand against him". Evers writes: "Ishmael lived by prey and rapine in the wilderness; and his posterity have all along infested Arabia and the neighbouring countries with their robberies and incursions. They live in a state of continual war with the rest of the world, and are both robbers by land, and pirates by sea".<sup>1</sup> Hamilton mentions that the Bichare, a tribe he met in Upper Egypt, had the custom of drinking warm blood, and comments on that with the following: "Perhaps it was against these meals that was issued the prohibition contained in Deut. ch. xii. ver. 23: 'Only be sure that thou eat not the blood; for the blood is the life, and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh'."<sup>2</sup> Further on, Hamilton writes:

In one of the passes of the mountains on the road to Schiment Elwah, was a large granite block, on which I observed a pyramidal heap of small stones; on this heap, all our attendants threw each of them a stone, and offered us one to do the same. The greatest part of them could give no reason for what they were doing, though some pretended that a murder had many years since been committed on the spot. It reminded us of Joshua's order to the Israelites, to commemorate the miraculous passage of the Jordan. A similar custom still prevails in many parts of the East.<sup>3</sup>

Cooper Willyams, chaplain to the Swiftsure, noticed on his short visit to Palestine in 1799, that:

It was not possible to view this country without calling to mind the wonderful events that have occurred in it at various periods from the earliest times; more particularly, the sacred life and history of our Redeemer, pressed foremost on our minds. One thing struck me in the form of the houses in the town now under our view, which served to corroborate the account of former travellers in this country, explaining several passages of scripture, particularly the following. In Matth. ch. xxiv. v. 17, our blessed Saviour in describing the distresses which shortly would overwhelm the land of Judea, tells his disciples, that "when the abomination of desolation is seen standing in the holy place, let him (says he) which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house, but fly," &c. The houses, in this country, are all flat roofed and communicate with each other; a person there might proceed to the city walls and escape into the country without coming down into the street. Though I am aware that it may be objected that this and most of the places now existing are of a much later date than the times when this prophecy was pronounced; yet as the dress and appearance of these people have suffered little change, so, in all probability, the general form of the buildings has been transmitted, and, though meanly, copied.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Evers, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23-4.

<sup>4</sup> Willyams, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-3, footnote.

The stream of associations hardly stopped among our travellers. Thus Clarke would see at Nazareth two women grinding at the mill "in a manner most forcibly illustrating the saying of our Saviour . . . 'Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left' which Christ said in his prediction concerning the destruction of Jerusalem".<sup>1</sup> When Clarke was in Egypt he observed the custom of the women's lamentation of the dead, and comments on that as follows (I have put his footnotes in brackets):

It is . . . evident, that this custom . . . and the funeral cry of other nations, are remains of ceremonies practised in honour of the dead in almost every country of the earth: they are the same that Homer describes at the death of Hector; (Homeri Iliados, lib. xxiv. p. 425. Ed. Spond. Basil. 1606) and they are frequently alluded to in the Sacred Scriptures (Jer. ix. 17, 18, 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. Judges xi. 39, 40. Amos v. 16. also Mark v. 38. &c.) "Call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning women, that they may come; And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters".<sup>2</sup>

In addition to its use to locate Biblical sites and confirm Biblical descriptions of Oriental manners, Near Eastern travel was also used to identify and illustrate scenes of historical events as they are revealed in the Scriptures. This recurs repeatedly in the accounts of Vervard, Maundrell, Shaw, Pococke, Perry, Clarke and others. It will be a tedious task to quote examples from each of these travellers to illustrate this point. Therefore I shall only refer to Shaw and Clarke as examples.

Shaw was particularly interested and occupied in tracing the route of the Israelite exodus, and fixing their different encampments, and the place from which they crossed the Red Sea to the land of Kanaan. After locating the land of Goshen, where the Hebrews first settled, Shaw proceeds in his laborious task, and writes:

Now, lest peradventure when the Hebrews saw war, they should repent and return to Egypt, God did not lead them through the way of the land of the Philistines, (viz. by Bishobesh, Tineh, and, so along the sea coast, towards Gaza and Ascalon) although that was the nearest: but he led them about through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. Ex. 13. 17. There are accordingly two roads whereby the Israelites might have been conducted, through the way of this wilderness, from Cairo (or Rameses as it is supposed to have been), to Pihahhiroth, upon the banks of the Red Sea. The one is continued through the valleys of Jendily, Rumeleah and Bedeah, that are bounded at each side, by the mountains of the Lower Thebais; the other lyeth higher or to the northward, having these mountains, for several leagues, on the right hand, and the

<sup>1</sup> Clarke, iv, 167.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, v, 106-7.

desert of the Egyptian Arabia on the left, 'till we turn, into the last of the valleys I have mentioned, through a remarkable breach or discontinuation in the northermost range of these mountains.

The latter, I presume, was the road which the Israelites took to the Red Sea; being somewhat longer than what leads us directly to Suez . . . Josephus then, and other authors who copy after him, seem to be too hasty in making the Israelites perform this journey in three days, by reckoning, as they do, a station for a day. For the Scriptures are silent in this particular, recording as it may be presumed, the stations only. The fatigue likewise would be too great, for a nation on foot, incumbered with their dough, their kneading troughs, their little children and cattle, to walk, at the rate of thirty miles a day. Another instance of the same nature occurs, Ex. 33.9. where Elim is mentioned as the next station after Marah, though these places are further distant from each other, than Kairo is from the Red Sea. Several intermediate stations therefore were omitted; the Holy Penman contenting himself with laying down such only as were the most remarkable.<sup>1</sup>

The traveller, who strongly believed in the miraculous circumstances that accompanied the Israelite exodus across the Red Sea, makes further use of his travel-experience and empirical observations to support the invulnerability of the Scriptures. He comments on the place where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea as follows:

The situation of this gulph, which is . . . The Weedy Sea, in the Scriptures, the Gulph of Heroopolis in the Greek and Latin geography, and the western arm, as the Arabian geographers call it, of the sea of Kolzum, lyeth nearly north and south; in a position very proper to be traversed by that strong East wind wick was sent to divide it. Ex. 14.21. The division that was thus made in the channel, the making the waters of it to stand on a heap (Ps. 78.13.) their being a wall to the Israelites on the right hand and on the left, (Ex. 14.22.) besides the distance of at least twenty miles, that this passage lyeth below the extremity of the Gulph, are circumstances which sufficiently vouch for the miraculousness of it, and no less contradict all such idle suppositions as pretend to account for it, from the nature and quality of tides, or from any such extraordinary recess of the sea, as it seems to have been too rashly compared to by Josephus.<sup>2</sup>

After mentioning several Biblical events that had taken place in the plain of Esdraelon,<sup>3</sup> Clarke meditated on the fields of Nāblus (Sichem), unable to suppress the stream of associations that flew vividly in his mind (I have inserted his footnotes in brackets):

The sacred story of events transacted in the fields of Sichem (Genesis, xxxvii) is, from our earliest years, remembered with delight; but having the territory actually before our eyes where those events took place, and beholding objects as they were described above three thousand years ago, the grateful impressions kindles into ecstasy. Along the valley, we beheld "a company of Ishmeelites, coming from Gilead,!" ("And, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt". Ibid. v. 25) as in the days of Reuben and Judah, "with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh", who would gladly have purchased another Joseph of his brethren, and conveyed him, as a

<sup>1</sup> Shaw, 343-4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 348-9.

<sup>3</sup> Clarke, iv, 270-71.

slave, to some Potiphar in Egypt. (Ibid, ver. 36.) Upon the hills around, flocks and herds were feeding, as of old ("And Israel said unto Joseph, do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem?" Genesis xxxvii. 13.): nor in the simple garb of the shepherds of Samaria was there anything to contradict the notions we may entertain of the appearance formerly exhibited by the sons of Jacob".<sup>1</sup>

Nowhere is the use of Near Eastern travel for Scriptural interpretation and illustration pointed to more clearly than in Clarke's following remarks which may close the first part of this chapter:

The pure Gospel of Christ, everywhere the herald of civilization and of science, is almost as little known in the Holy Land as in Caliphornia or New Holland. A series of legendary traditions, mingled with remains of Judaism, and the wretched phantasies of illiterate ascetics, may now and then exhibit a glimmering of heavenly light; but if we seek for the blessed effects of Christianity in the Land of Canaan, we must look for that period, when "the desert shall blossom as the rose, and the wilderness become a fruitful field". For this reason we had early resolved to use the Sacred Scriptures as our only guide throughout this interesting territory; and the delight afforded by an internal evidence of truth, in every instance where fidelity of description could be ascertained by a comparison with existing documents, surpassed even all we had anticipated. Such extraordinary instances of coincidence, even with the customs of the country as they are now retained, and so many wonderful examples of illustration afforded by contrasting the simple narrative with the appearances exhibited, made us only regret the shortness of our time, and the limited sphere of our abilities for the comparison.<sup>2</sup>

### *Near Eastern Travel and Homer's Genius*

The strong demand to return to Nature, explore the origins of genius and try to understand the poetical heritage of mankind in its original local atmospheres was also manifested by Robert Wood's travels in the Near East to illustrate and interpret Homer's poetry and original genius.

Just as Lowth's lectures gave a new impulse to the study of the Holy Land to illustrate and interpret the Scriptures, so did Wood's *Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer*<sup>3</sup> for Homeric studies and criticism. Goethe expresses his realization of Wood's great accomplishment in throwing new lights on the Homeric poetry in the following remark:

Was mehrere Reisende zu Aufklärung der heiligen Schriften getan, leisteten andere für den Homer. Durch Guys ward man eingeleitet, Wood gab der Sache den Schwung. Eine Göttinger Rezension des anfangs sehr seltenen Originals machte uns mit der Absicht bekannt und belehrte uns, wie weit sie ausgeführt worden. Wir sahen nun nicht mehr in jenen Gedichten ein angespanntes und aufgedunsenes Heldenwesen, sondern die abgespiegelte Wahrheit einer uralten Gegenwart und suchten uns dieselbe möglichst heranzuziehen. Zwar wollte uns zu gleicher Zeit nicht völlig in den Sinn, wenn behauptet wurde, daß, um die homerischen Naturen recht zu verstehen, man sich mit

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 271-2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 137-9.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit., see above p. 108.

den wilden Völkern und ihren Sitten bekannt machen müsse, wie sie uns die Reisebeschreiber der neuen Welten schildern: denn es ließ sich doch nicht leugnen, daß sowohl Europäer als Asiaten in den Homerischen Gedichten schon auf einem hohen Grade der Kultur dargestellt worden, vielleicht auf einem höhern, als die Zeiten des Trojanischen Krieg mochten genossen haben. Aber jene Maxime war doch mit dem herrschenden Naturbekenntnis übereinstimmend, und insofern mochten wir sie gelten lassen.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of Wood's *Essay* for the scientific Homeric criticism has been adequately dealt with by G. Finsler,<sup>2</sup> and it points to the growing significance that classical criticism in general, and Homeric in particular, had acquired since the famous, but ridiculous, controversy between the supporters of the "ancients" and those of the "moderns" that took place in France and England during the late 17th and early 18th centuries.<sup>3</sup> It is no wonder that Wood's *Essay* in defence of Homer forms a last contribution, within this controversy, in support of the "ancients", where it opens a new chapter in the study of genuine creation, or, as Wood expressed it, the original imitation of nature in its simplest and most beautiful forms.

Among Wood's literary plans, whose fulfilment was interrupted by his political activities and his early death, the study of the Homeric poetry "in the countries where Ulysses travelled and Homer sung" took the most important place. In those countries he believed that the *Iliad* would assume new beauties and the *Odyssey* would be most pleasing. Thus his Egyptian and Syrian tours, as part of his Levantine travels, were a sort of preliminary work of collecting experiences, observations and material for his Homeric study, which he had already hinted at in his book on Baalbek.<sup>4</sup>

Of Wood's *Essay* we are concerned here with those parts in which the traveller, depending on his travel experience, vindicates Homer's veracity in the verses dealing with the geography, mythology, and ethnology of the Near East. Wood's arguments concerning Homer's accounts of the Near East fall in the following points, which will be stated, as much as possible, in Wood's own words:

<sup>1</sup> Goethe's *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 6: *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, 12. Buch, Bertelsmann Verlag, Gütersloh, 1958, p. 448; Hecht, pp. 19-20.

<sup>2</sup> *Homer in der Neuzeit von Dante bis Goethe*. Leipzig und Berlin 1912, pp. 258 and 368-72; quoted from Hecht, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> For this controversy, called the Phalaris controversy, see Sampson, *Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*, Cambridge, 1949, pp. 451, 466, 496.

<sup>4</sup> *Ruins of Balbec*, p. 16.

1. Wood writes: "The lines which have given occasion to so much censure, are those in the fourth book of the *Odyssey*, where Menelaus, relating to Telemachus his adventures, describes Pharos as situated a day's sail from Egypt. Those who saw that this island was not eight stadia, or an English mile from Alexandria, made strong objections to the accuracy of the description".<sup>1</sup> After discussing the gradual formation of the Delta by the earth and slime brought by the Nile and accumulating at its mouth, a fact which Wood tries to prove by giving evidences from his personal experience and observations in Egypt, he concludes: "Upon the whole of this reasoning, it must appear doubtful, whether any part of Lower Egypt existed in the Poet's time; which seems to have been the opinion of Aristotle: but, supposing the south angle of the Delta to have been then formed, its distance from Pharos would make above fifty leagues, which may be called a day's sail, agreeably to the general proportion, which Homer observes between time and distance in his navigation".<sup>2</sup>

2. Then he proceeds: "Having so far endeavoured to vindicate the Poet, as to the length of this voyage, it may not be improper, while this subject is before us, to say something of its difficulty and danger, which Menelaus mentions with much dread and anxiety. As some account of the navigation of this coast will furnish the best comment on this part of the Poet's description, I shall lay before the Reader a narrative of what fell within my own observations, relative to this matter".<sup>3</sup> He describes the great difficulty of passing the Bugaz (the mouth of the Nile at Rosetta), which he, himself, had experienced in 1743,<sup>4</sup> and concludes: "I flatter myself, that this account of the ancient and present state of the coast of Egypt may justify Homer's account of the length and danger of Menelaus's voyage and vindicate him from the charge of ignorance on this head, under which he has so long laboured".<sup>5</sup>

3. To prove that the "high compliments, which have been so long paid to the knowledge and wisdom of the antient Egyptians, have not been so well founded as is generally imagined, and that Homer's mythology was his own and was Greek in origin", Wood writes:

<sup>1</sup> Wood's *Essay*, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto.

<sup>4</sup> pp. 109-14.

<sup>5</sup> p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 108-109.



... I am of opinion, that Egypt, though civilized, when Greece was in a state of barbarity, never got beyond mediocrity, either in the arts of peace or war. Nor shall we find this out of the order of things, if we consider the different nature of those countries. The singular advantage of Egypt, was, a climate so temperate, that little clothing was necessary; and a soil so fertile, that it yielded food with very little labour. And its situation in the tract of the East India trade will account for its riches. But these circumstances, to which it owes antiquity, population, and wealth, are not favourable to genius. Great efforts and happy exertions, either of mind or body, are not to be expected in a country where Nature has so well provided against hunger and cold, and where an universal asmeness of soil, and a constant serenity of sky, afford nothing to awake the fancy or rouse the passions. Compare this with the landscape of Greece, the varieties of her soil, and the vicissitude of her seasons; and we shall not think it extraordinary, that the arts of life should begin in one of these countries, and be carried to perfection in the other.<sup>1</sup>

#### Wood's concluding remark:

Though the persons and perhaps some part of the action of his fable might have been originally taken from Egypt and the East: yet we know that his figures, I may say portraits, were his own; and the scenery of his mythology is Grecian. And (what strengthens on conjectures with regard to his country) of the various perspectives, into which we may attempt to reduce this Greek mythological scenery, the Ionian point of view will appear predominant.<sup>2</sup>

4. Wood, in his discussion of Homer's characterization of Near Eastern manners and ethnology, writes: "Our polite neighbours the French seem to be most offended at certain pictures of primitive simplicity, so unlike those refined modes of modern life, in which they have taken the lead; and to this we may partly impute the severe treatment which the Poet met with in that country, about the end of the last and the beginning of this century: yet Homer was not without respectable friends and powerful protection upon that occasion . . . However, as we found the manners of the Iliad still preserved in some parts of the East, nay retaining, in a remarkable degree, that genuine cast of natural simplicity, which we admire in his works and the sacred books, it may not be improper to inquire, how such an invariability in the modes of life should be peculiar to that part of the world, before we examine how far this resemblance between such distant periods extends." <sup>3</sup>

In this part of the Homeric study, Wood attempts to illustrate and justify his idea "that so many of the customs of Homer's age, and still more of the ancient Jews, should be continued down to the present times, in countries, which have undergone such a variety of

<sup>1</sup> pp. 124-25.

<sup>2</sup> p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> pp. 145-6.

political revolutions".<sup>1</sup> Here we obtain an extensive description of Arabia based on the traveller's own views, to which is added the ethnological comparison of "the Heroic, Patriarchal, and Bedouin manners" in sharp contrast to the conditions of the highly-developed European culture. Merits and defects are scrupulously weighed, and Homer's sublime ethics is duly recognized, as, for example, in the rôle allotted to women: "for though the female subordination is strongly marked in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, yet women seem to make a more considerable part of society there than among the ancient Jews; and certainly much more than the present Oriental restrictions on this head permit".<sup>2</sup> Though Wood does not conceal the roughness of the times in which, like the Bedouin Arabs, "the characters of prince, shepherd, and poet" were united in one person, and in spite of all the unrestrained wildness and barbarity of the "heroic" peoples we still win the impression that they share "the same original glowing imagination", and that Nature found among them an inimitable and highly admirable way of expression.

At the end of this chapter on the Homeric manners Wood writes:

As there is no part of this Essay to which the observations which occurred to me in my Eastern travels, particularly in Palestine, Egypt, and above all, the interior of Arabia, contribute so largely, as to this article of Homer's Manners; so there is none, which has cost me so much pains in selecting and arranging, out of copious materials, what might be proper for this contracted specimen, which, after all, is imperfect in its present state. I shall be disappointed if some of the Poet's abler admirers, taking up his defence on this ground, do not anticipate part of what I have further to say on this subject, when I shall attempt to try the truth and consistence of the leading characters of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, by that true test, viz. the manners of the Heroic age; to the reader who judges of them by the present times, the courage of Achilles must appear brutal ferocity, and the wisdom of Ulysses low cunning.<sup>3</sup>

And his conclusion:

If this short sketch of Heroic life be just, it allows me to conclude with the highest compliment to the powers and extent of Homer's original genius: for I may venture to say, that from the greatest uniformity of simple manners that ever fell to the share of any Poet, he drew the greatest variety of distinct character that has ever been produced by the same hand.<sup>4</sup>

From the evidences shown in this chapter we recognize the importance of Near Eastern travel in preparing the way for a better understanding of the original language of the Holy Scriptures and of the Greek poet.

<sup>1</sup> p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> p. 164.

<sup>3</sup> pp. 179-80.

<sup>4</sup> Ditto.

## D. ROMANTIC TENDENCIES IN THE TRAVEL BOOKS

It is true that the Romantic Revival in England first took shape as a literary movement in the first half of the 19th century, but certain romantic phenomena seem to be anticipated during the 18th.<sup>1</sup> Examples in 18th century literature are to be found among others in Addison's *Spectator* (1711-14),<sup>2</sup> Gray's *Elegy* (1750), *The Progress of Poetry* (1754), and *The Bard* (1757),<sup>3</sup> Macpherson's *Ossianic* poetry (1762-3),<sup>4</sup> Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* (1770),<sup>5</sup> and the anonymous poem *Otaheite* (1774).<sup>6</sup> Similarly, we can find out romantic trends among our Near Eastern travellers, which appear in three different themes: 1. Lamentation over the glorious past of the Near East, and the insignificance of human affairs. 2. Interest in Nature, as revealed in the "picturesque". 3. Interest in Nature, as revealed in human beings.

1. *The Theme of the Insignificance of Man*

Nearly all 18th century travellers to the Near East visited this area after having perused the best classical authorities on the civilizations of ancient Egypt, Babylon, Phoenicia and Judea. To them the cities of Alexandria, Jerusalem and Tyre were centres of human learning and abodes of eternal glory. Most of them were

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<sup>1</sup> "While a period is thus a section of time to which some sort of unity is ascribed, it is obvious that this unity can be only relative. It means merely that during this period a certain scheme of norms has been realized most fully. If the unity of any one period were absolute, the periods would lie next to each other like blocks of stone, without continuity of development. Thus the survival of a preceding scheme of norms and the anticipations of a following scheme are inevitable". (René Wellek & Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (Harvard Series 22), N.Y., 1956, p. 256.) William Lyon Phelps writes also: "It is very true that the general character of eighteenth century literature was formal, critical, and prosaic; but it is also true that beneath this outward crust the fire of Romanticism was glowing. The volcanic eruptions of genius which marked the first years of the present century can be explained only by the examination of previous conditions. These conditions I have endeavoured to explain with some fullness and clearness; and the result ought to prove that the beginnings of the English Romantic Movement should date back to the first quarter of the eighteenth century; and that during the second quarter, and especially during the fifth decade, the strength of the movement was much greater than seems to have been commonly supposed." (*The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement, A Study in Eighteenth Century Literature*, Boston, 1893, pp. 5-6.)

<sup>2</sup> C. S. Lewis' essay on Addison, in *Eighteenth Century English Literature*, edited by James L. Clifford, New York, 1959, pp. 144-56.

<sup>3</sup> Chauncey B. Tinker, *Nature's Simple Plan*, Princeton, 1922, pp. 61-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70-72.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

shocked to find those famous cities immersed in deplorable states of misery and insignificance. Struck with this disappointment, the travellers passionately yielded to their aroused emotions and lamented the past glory of these areas, reflecting on the insignificance of human cares and feats under the hard blow of time. Thus Veryard exclaimed on seeing Tyre in 1682:

"The pitiful and desolate State of this City, gave us a good Lessor of the instability of things here below, and I could not forbear to cry out with the Prophet Isaiah: 'Who hath taken this Counsel against Tyre, the Crowning City, Whose Merchants are Princes, whose Traffickers are the Honourable of the Earth?'

The antient Splendour of that proud City is reduced to a confus'd heap of Rubbish; and the Port, which was one of the best in those parts, is quite decay'd and block'd with Sand. We found no other inhabitants there but a few poor Moors and Arabs, who sheltered themselves in the Vaults and Cellars that remain amongst the Ruins."<sup>1</sup>

These moral reflections recur more frequently in Aaron Hill's account. The young, dreamy student who made his grand tour in the Near East in 1699, was so strongly moved by the ruins of Egyptian antiquity that he could not help exclaiming:

"Oh! blind, willfull, vain, mistaken men! unthinking, weak, and shadow-like mortality! Why do we still grasp eagerly at riches? Why esteem the transitory blessings of a wealthy splendour? Why delight in worldly grandeur, or the noisy pomp of momentary majesty, when not the story scenes of ancient pride, and countenanc'd vainglory, can preserve the memory of their forgotten founders, but the strongest and most stately cities of the universe submit their marble to the teeth of time, and prove in ruins, the undoubted truth of Ovid's elegant reflections on the world's uncertainty."<sup>2</sup>

At the sight of Jerusalem, the traveller comments with deep sorrow:

"But now, alas! She can no longer boast those gayeties of nature and combining art, which swell'd her excellence in former ages, all those bright and tow'ring marks of splendour and authority are sunk to nothing, rocky barrenness, now stares a stranger wildly in the face, where once he might have charm'd his senses, with a glitt'ring prospect of refin'd magnificence, and craggy precipices in the very midst of this depopulated scene of sorrow, seem to groan out in complaining murmurs, mortal glory cometh up, and is cut down like a flower, and passeth away like a shadow, and is no more seen."<sup>3</sup>

His passion was so heightened at the sight of the sepulchre of the kings of Judah 'where the broken pieces, and disjointed bones, left carelessly about the bottom of some tombs,' that his contemplations found expression only in poetry:

<sup>1</sup> Veryard, 323.

<sup>2</sup> Aaron Hill, 244.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 278.

Is this alas! our boasted mortal state?  
 Is it for this, we covet to be great?  
 What happiness from envied grandeur springs,  
 When these poor reliques once were mighty kings?  
 O frail uncertainty of human power,  
 While graves can majesty itself devour!  
 While death distinguishes nor sex, nor birth,  
 And regal graces moulder into earth!  
 Alas! how strange, how sad a change is here,  
 In what a dress does royalty appear!  
 O where is now the globe of thy command?  
 Or where the Scepter, that adorn'd this hand?  
 Where's now the Crown, which once these temples bound?  
 Or where those trailing robes, which swept the ground?  
 Where are those brawny guards, which ow'd thy state?  
 And where those cringings crowds, which once were proud to wait?  
 Are those thin jaws the same, which us'd to treat,  
 Thy pamper'd palate with such choice of meat?  
 Can narrow limits, such as these, contain  
 The chang'd extent of thy once larger reign?  
 Canst thou, at whose least frown a nation shook,  
 And dreaded lightning from thy stormy look?  
 Canst thou alas! be passively content,  
 To let intruders search thy monument?  
 Thou, who wert once too great for vulgar touch,  
 Can thy proud majesty be chang'd so much?  
 That common men, unknown to kings like you,  
 Thus poize you, turn you round, and wonder at the view.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Shaw, who toured the Near East in the years 1721-22, is relieved from his sad meditations on the instability of human affairs by the Christian faith that reveals to him the only real and everlasting Glory:

"He [the traveller] is struck immediately with the very solitude of those few domes, and porticos that are left standing; which history tells him, were once crowded with inhabitants: where Scyphax and Masinissa; Scipio and Caesar, where the Orthodox Christians, and the Arians; the Saracens and the Turks, have given laws in their turns. Every heap of ruins points out to [the traveller] the weakness and instability of all human art and contrivance; reminding him further of the many thousands that lye buried below, now lost in oblivion, and forgotten to the world. Whilst he is full of these meditations, Christianity steps in to his relief; acquainting him, that we are only strangers and pilgrims upon Earth; seeking a city, (not, like these, subject to the strokes of time and fortune, but) which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."<sup>2</sup>

When Carmichael crossed the Desert Route from Aleppo to Baṣra, in 1751, he came in sight of the Syrian town Raḥbah and its surroundings and remarks:

"Rackba is still a large place, but much inferior to its ancient condition. Indeed this country affords a melancholy proof of the instability of human affairs, when it is remembered that, in the part adjacent to the river Euphrates and within the compass

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 283-4.

<sup>2</sup> Shaw, preface, xv.

of thirty miles, there were formerly not less than three hundred and fifty cities, towns, and villages, of ruins scarce a single trace at this time remains".<sup>1</sup>

He expresses the same feeling when he vainly tries to find a trace of the ancient, magnificent Babylon:

"Indeed, when I consider the once magnificent state of Babylon, its stupendous walls and hanging gardens, so pompously described in ancient history, it seems little less than miraculous that it should be so totally eradicated as not to leave sufficient traces to determine, with any exactness, its former situation."<sup>2</sup>

## 2. *Interest in the "Picturesque"*

In an age of reason, comfort and composure, in the 18th century, when men began to breathe under the burden of overcivilized life, it is no wonder that man began to long for Nature and to find joy and relaxation in natural life, whether in the picturesque landscape or among primitive and simple people. This trend was already strongly felt in the 18th century, but reached its full realization during the early 19th century.<sup>3</sup> As early as the second decade of the 18th century, Addison divided the sources of imaginative pleasure into three classes—the Great, the Uncommon, and the Beautiful. As specimen of the Great he mentions 'an open champaign country, a vast uncultivated desert, huge heaps of mountains, high rocks and precipices, or a wide expanse of water'—all of which produce 'a delightful stillness and amazement in the soul.'<sup>4</sup> This interest in the "picturesque" in nature finds its expression in different ways among our travellers, and puts them into various moods, ranging from delight, to amazement and awe. Thus Maundrell was fascinated at the sight of Qannubin, on the Lebanon. He found its situation 'admirably adapted for retirement and devotion':

"... for there is a very deep rupture in the side of Libanus, running at least seven hours travel directly up into the mountain. It is on both sides exceeding steep and high, cloath'd with fragrant greens from top to bottom, and everywhere refresh'd with fountains, falling down from the rocks in pleasant cascades; the ingenious work of nature. These streams, all uniting at the bottom, make a full and rapid torrent, whose agreeable murmuring is heard all over the place, and adds no small pleasure to it."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Carruthers, *The Desert Route to India*, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>3</sup> Tinker, *op. cit.*; F. L. Lucas, *The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal*, Cambridge, 1948, pp. 92-101.

<sup>4</sup> *Spectator*, 412, quoted from Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

<sup>5</sup> Maundrell, 1740 edition, pp. 142-3.

The panoramic scene of Damascus from a suburban precipice fills him with delight:

"You have indeed, from the precipice, the most perfect prospect of Damaskus. And certainly no place in the world can promise the beholder, at a distance, greater voluptuousness. It is situate in an even plain of so great extent, that you can but just discern the mountains that compass it on the farther side. It stands on the west side of the plain, at not about two miles distance from the place where the river Barrady breaks out from between the mountains; its gardens almost to the very place."<sup>1</sup>

Aaron Hill was delighted at the sight of the Jordan river and describes the view as follows:

"There is not in the universe a river of a more delightful prospect, or agreeable contrivance, as to the meandering forms, and winding labyrinths, wherein it glides with an uncommon gentleness, along the midst of plains and vallies, sometimes thro' an open country, then inclos'd on either side by rising ridges of fine woody hills, and everywhere adorn'd on both its banks, with shady groves of poplar, alder-trees, the mournful willow, and a thousand other lovely greens, surprisingly enchanting every eye with sudden wonder, at the unassisted gayeties, of virgin nature."<sup>2</sup>

On crossing the area opposite to the island of Arwād, on the Syrian shore, Shaw's imagination was touched by the grand beauty of the surroundings:

"The situation of the country something in it so extravagant and peculiar to itself, that it never fails to contribute an agreeable mixture of melancholy and delight to all who pass through it. The uncommon contrast and disposition of woods and sepulchres, rocks and grotto's; the medley of sounds and echo's from birds and beasts, cascades and water falls; the distant roaring of the sea and the composed solemnity of the place, very naturally reminds us of those beautiful descriptions which the ancient poets have left us of the groves and retreats of their rural deities."<sup>3</sup>

J. Griffiths, who crossed the Desert Route between Aleppo and Basra in 1785, was fascinated by the picturesque landscape on the way between Adana and Antioch:

"Our road was through a delightful country, adorned with the most beautiful trees and shrubs, and every appearance of cultivation. The hedges were formed of myrtles, much larger than any which grow in the northern climates. Larches, laurels, and oaks, alternately, or in clusters, presented their interesting gradations of the lively green; and the softest air wafted the perfumes of a thousand odoriferous shrubs. Hills in various ridges and directions, formed a background; and the gilded tints of an evening sun threw an indescribable beauty over the whole of the picture."<sup>4</sup>

He even enjoys watching a desert sand storm, and finds it something quite spectacular:

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 122.

<sup>2</sup> Hill, 296.

<sup>3</sup> Shaw, 326.

<sup>4</sup> Griffiths, 313-14.

"Gusts of wind, and indeed continual strong breezes all night, covered us with sand, and proved inconceivably troublesome. It was here I saw many of those columns of sand, collected by a circular movement of the atmosphere, and appearing as a cone, lengthening and increasing in bulk to a prodigious height. The resemblance they bear to what the sailors term water-spouts, cannot fail of occurring to those who have noticed such phenomena at sea; and when they are multiplied in number, as is frequently the case, there is something peculiarly interesting, and even grand, in the spectacle."<sup>1</sup>

The country landscape round Rashid (Rosetta) in Egypt, though not to be compared with "that universal verdure" of the banks of the Rhine or the Danube, has its own romantic beauty to Browne's eyes:

"The beauty and fertility of the country round Rashid deserve all the praise that has been given them. The eye is not, indeed gratified with the romantic views, flowing lines, the mixture of plain and mountain, nor that universal verdure that is to be observed on the banks of the Rhine or the Danube. But his taste is poor who would reduce all kinds of picturesque beauty to one criterion. To me after being wearied with the sandy dryness of the barren district to the west, the vegetable soil of Rashid, filled with every production necessary for the sustenance, or flattering to the luxury of man, the rice fields covering the superficies with verdure, the orange groves exhaling aromatic odours, the date trees formed into an umbrageous roof over the head; shall I say the mosques and the tombs; which though wholly incompatible with the rules of architecture, yet grave and simple in the structure, are adapted to fill the mind with pleasing ideas; and above all, the unruffled weight of waters of the majestic Nile, reluctantly descending to the sea, where its own vast tide, after pervading and fertilizing so long a tract, is to be lost in the general mass: these objects filled me with ideas, which, if not great or sublime, were certainly among the most soothing and tranquil that have ever affected my mind."<sup>2</sup>

Walsh feels almost the same pleasure at Rashid (Rosetta):

"Nothing at the moment could surpass the beauty of the scene; and to our eyes, so long unaccustomed to any kind of verdure, the environs of Rosetta, and the shaded banks of the Nile, could not but exhibit a prospect highly delightful.

This reviving verdure, both sides of the river thickly covered with date and other trees, and numberless villages not half a mile asunder scattered along the banks, rendered the whole of the picture quite enchanting..."<sup>3</sup>

The view that extends before Hamilton's eyes on approaching Aswān is both romantic and exotic:

"The approach to Es Sovan from the North is striking and picturesque: the insulated rocks in the mid stream, the island of Elephantine immediately behind them, the fortunate site of the town on a gentle slope, terminating in a hill, with a small fortress to the East; and to the West the mountains of the Desert, with the tomb of an Arab Shekh on their summit, and a ruined monastery half way down the steep,—all combined to form an interesting and pleasing picture."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 381.

<sup>2</sup> Browne, 33-4.

<sup>3</sup> Walsh, 235.

<sup>4</sup> Hamilton, 64.



Probably no traveller reveals this passionate delight in the "picturesque" more than E. D. Clarke, who left us two prolific volumes about his Palestinean and Egyptian travels. It would take too long to quote all the passages in which this romantic interest in natural landscape is expressed. Therefore it may be sufficient to quote two: one on the Holy Land, and the other on Egypt.

Describing the Lake of Genesareth in Palestine Clarke writes:

"It is surrounded by objects well calculated to heighten the solemn impression made by such a picture; and, independently of the local feelings likely to be excited in its contemplation, it affords one of the most striking prospects in the Holy Land. It is by comparison alone that any due conception of its appearance can be communicated to the minds of those who have not seen it . . . In picturesque beauty it comes nearest to the Lake of Locarno in Italy . . . its broad and extended surface, covering the bottom of a profound valley, surrounded by lofty and precipitous eminences, when added to the impression under which every Christian pilgrim approaches it, gives to it a character of unparalleled dignity."<sup>1</sup>

Egyptian landscape took the traveller's fancy more strongly, and the expression of his delight at the panoramic "picturesque" view of the Nile, the cultivated fields and the grand pyramids in the background, is given many places in his account. The following passage is, indeed, most exemplary:

"As we left Bulac, we had one of the finest prospects in the world, presented by the wide surface of the Nile crowded with vessels, the whole city of Cairo, the busy throng of shipping at the quay, the Citadel and heights of Mokattam, the distant Said, the Pyramids of Djiza and of Saccara, the Obelisk of Heliopolis, and the Tombs of the Sultans; all these were in view at the same time; the greater objects being tinged with the most brilliant effect of light it is possible to conceive; while the noise of the waters, the shouts of the boatmen, and the moving picture everywhere offered by the Nile, gave a cheerful contrast to the stillness of the Desert, and the stedfast majesty of monuments, beautifully described by a classic bard as "looking tranquility." We continued our progress during the evening and the whole of the night."<sup>2</sup>

### 3. *Interest in the "Natural" Man*

The feeling of boredom and disgust at a society based too much on orderliness and civilized values, in which men 'were trying to be more reasonable than it is reasonable to try to be' gave the birth to many outbursts in the literature of the 18th century.<sup>3</sup> Lucas describes the Age of Reason as an unpoetic age, where "the

<sup>1</sup> Clarke, iv, 210.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, v, 282.

<sup>3</sup> See chapter I and II on "The State of Nature", and "Ancient Bard and Gentle Savage", in Tinker's *Nature's Simple Plan*, pp. 1-31 and 61-89.

natural Adam began to chafe under these silver claims of good sense and good taste" and "longed to dream again."<sup>1</sup> Men expressed their need to go back to Nature and study the natural behaviour of the Noble Savage.<sup>2</sup> Robert Wood the celebrated explorer of Palmyra and Baalbek attempted in his travels in the Near East to study the background of Homer's natural originality, and other travellers expressed their admiration of born civility and nobleness among the Arabs of the Desert and the inhabitants of this area who were not affected by the tints of luxury and over-exaggerated civilization.

Robert Wood, who occasionally reveals part of his observations and travel-experiences in his work on the Original genius of Homer,<sup>3</sup> shows a special interest in the study of the Bedouin Arab, the true son of Nature, to throw new lights on the background of Homer's poetry. Thus he comments:

"It seems universally true with regard to a people habituated to the sweets of unbounded liberty, that they are not easily tempted to resign the roving pleasures of that unhoused free condition for the quiet, ease, security, or even luxuries, of regular society. This observation may be justly applied to the true Bedouin. The Hottentot or Cherokee is not fonder of his native woods, than the wandering Arab is of his sandy domain. As his wants are few, for he knows only those of Nature; so his desires are confined; for he either subdues, or affects to disclaim, those he cannot gratify. Thus architecture and agriculture are not merely matters of indifference to him, as things out of his reach; he holds them in contempt, priding himself in his port tent, under the walls of cities; and despising tillage as a mean occupation, compared with his rambling pastoral life . . . He is temperate, brave, friendly, hospitable, true to his engagements, nice in his point of honour, and, in general, scrupulously observant of the duties of his religion: yet his ideas of plunder and rapine are perfectly conformable to those of the heroic and patriarchal times."<sup>4</sup>

In another place he writes:

"The modern Arab, in whom I have seen the characters of prince, shepherd, and poet united, retains, in his compositions of this kind, the wildness, irregularity, and indelicacy of his forefathers, with a considerable share of the same original glowing imagination, which we could discover, even in their extempore productions, and under the disadvantage of crude and hasty translation."<sup>5</sup>

Campbell, who crossed Syria and Iraq on his way to India in 1781, describes with admiration the natural beauty of Arab and

<sup>1</sup> Lucas, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-8.

<sup>2</sup> See Hoxie Neale Fairchild, *The Noble Savage, A Study in Romantic Naturalism*, New York, 1928.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 150-51.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

Turkish women, their natural chastity, gentility and abstinence from using any paints.<sup>1</sup>

In illustrating the chivalrous attitude of Near Eastern men towards women he writes:

"When the women grow up, they are not, like our women here, subjected to the contagion of infamous gallantry; neither are the men trained to, nor do they pride themselves, like some among us, on the arts of seduction. In fact, that practice makes no part of the accomplishments of their fine gentlemen; nay, it is held by them to be infamous. There are no such characters to be found in Turkey as your box-lobby loungers—none of your upstart cubs like those who dandle the best part of the day through Pall-Mall, St. James's-Street, and Bond-Street; who, without birth, wealth, education, or parts, fancy themselves fine fellows, and powder their noses in ladies' head-dresses, whispering them in order to get the reputation of gallantry; who strut like Bantam cocks, and assume a fierce air to conceal their conscious want of spirit; and dressed in a suit of regimentals, bought by Papa, at Mama's request, to exhibit sweet Master Jacky to advantage in the Park—though never to be soiled with gun-powder, or perforated with a ball in the nasty field of battle . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The same remark about the natural beauty of Arab women is mentioned by Griffiths, who had the opportunity of keeping company with some ladies, during an odd experience among the Nuṣayrieh in northern Syria. He remarks that the women "were not only clean, but much more attractive than has been expressed by several travellers . . . Their limbs are finely formed, as is generally the case where Nature is not confined by the trammels of dress; and their teeth are beautifully white."<sup>3</sup>

The Arabs of the desert take his fancy during his caravan journey from Aleppo to Baṣra. Though they had no chance of education, their natural behaviour was of a nobler and grander character than education could afford:

" . . . They fully deserve the reputation which various travellers have allowed them for liberality, kindness, and a strict regard to their engagements. Those of superior rank have an *inherent* principle of politeness also, which is at all times evident; and their easy, graceful deportment, combined with a seriousness of manner, inspires both respect and confidence. Sparing of words themselves, they seem to be offended at a repetition of questions . . . Their dissatisfaction was manifested by no act of rudeness: though teased, they replied, but with more solemnity and precision.

"Their hospitality is sincere; and was exemplified, not only whenever we approached either the Schaik or any of his superior servants, whilst drinking coffee, or eating their frugal meal of rice; but also, whenever a kid or sheep was killed, which occurred but seldom, it never escaped them to offer cheerfully some portion of their repast: and repeated inquiries were made by the Schaik of our welfare and our wants . . .

<sup>1</sup> Campbell, part ii, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 29-30.

<sup>3</sup> Griffiths, 329.

"The honesty of these simple people appears to be so well attested, that a few individual examples of petty thefts ought not to invalidate the general good opinion which they have deserved . . ." <sup>1</sup>

W. R. Hamilton, who spent two years exploring Egyptian antiquities (1801-1802), describes a tribe of Bedouins near Aswān (the Bišāra) and concludes:

"They are much more sensible, shrewd and intelligent than the Fellahs of Egypt. Even in this low state of civilization, the mind of man may be naturally enlarged by a frequent change of scene, and the savage Mountaineer may be more capable of feeling, as well as acting, than the savage Lowlander." <sup>2</sup>

It seems that some petty chiefs in Upper Egypt and caravan shaikhs attracted the travellers's interest, and made a good impression on their minds. Thus Hamilton was attracted by the manners of the Āğa of Aswān who received the traveller and his company with unaffected courtesy:

"He spoke to us, with affection . . . his salute was to offer his hand, lay the palm on ours, and put to his lips: and the same was repeated by his whole suite, with an air of gravity and decorum, and at the same time an ease and grace equally removed from vulgarity and formality, which is only possessed by Orientals, and by those, I may say, as a common gift of nature to the highest and the lowest ranks." <sup>3</sup>

Similarly Griffiths admires the shaikh of the desert caravan between Aleppo and Basra:

"He was of a particularly handsome countenance, of dignified manners; and, when mounted upon his mare, armed with a lance, yatagaun, and pistols, his appearance was strikingly martial. He frequently braved the danger of meeting with his enemies by reconnoitring along, at a considerable distance from the caravan, to the great anxiety of the relations and friends who were left in charge of it; and our confidence and security were diminished whenever he was absent." <sup>4</sup>

## E. LITERARY APPRECIATION OF THE TRAVEL-ACCOUNTS AND THEIR TRACES IN THE ENGLISH LITERATURE OF THE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURIES

Before discussing whether travel-books in general form a definite branch in the field of literature we ought to mention two facts: First, the wide popularity that travel-books have always enjoyed among the readers of all epochs, as they "do not cater exclusively for the scholar, the geographer and the historian, but very largely

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, pp. 386-8.

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>4</sup> Griffiths, P. 386

for the general public, whose capacity for absorbing literature of travel seems never exhausted.”<sup>1</sup> W. C. Brown has elucidated this point successfully in his article on the popularity of English travel books about the Near East.<sup>2</sup> The second fact is the slight mention of the literature of travel in works on literary history.<sup>3</sup> It is true that the Cambridge History of English Literature has devoted three chapters to the literature of travel, but the place that the latter has been given in literature is too slight to deserve mention.<sup>4</sup> Even the travel-books that have been considered of some literary value are very few in number, and their writers are known rather as authors than as travellers, whereas most writers on travel are remembered as travellers rather than as authors.<sup>5</sup>

These two facts, namely, the popularity of travel-books, and their minor importance in literary criticism and history, lead us to ask the following questions: 1. What are the reasons for this popularity of the travel-books, and, 2. How can we explain this indifference to them on the part of literary historians and critics?

To explain the increasing popularity of travel-books, we have to search for the answer in three different mediums: the subject matter of the travel-books proper, the travellers themselves, and the reading public. Travel-accounts contain something “different” from ordinary every-day environment; they convey descriptions of “other” countries, “other” peoples, religions and manners. The mystery of anything strange and unheard of remains fascinating and nourishing to human curiosity.<sup>6</sup> By the end of the 18th century, travel-books were able to fire the imagination and arouse the curiosity of the age. “They rekindled a craving for that mixture of the unknown and the marvellous which they embodied and whose echo was to be found in every bosom.”<sup>7</sup> But the “strangeness”

<sup>1</sup> M. H. Braaksma, *Travel and Literature, an Attempt at a Literary Appreciation of English Travel-books about Persia, from the Middle Ages to the Present Day*, Groningen, 1938, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Philological Quarterly*, xv (January, 1936), pp. 70-80.

<sup>3</sup> Braaksma, *op. cit.*, p. 1; R. W. Frantz, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14; Brown, *supra*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>4</sup> The Cambridge History of English Literature, 15 vols., 1920-27: vol. iv, ch. iv: The Literature of the Sea, from the origins to Hakluyt, and ch. v: Seafaring and Travel, both by C. N. Robinson and vol. xiv, ch. vii, F. A. Kirkpatrick, *The Literature of Travel, 1700-1900*.

<sup>5</sup> Braaksma, p. 1; Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

<sup>6</sup> Braaksma, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Annual Register*, 1797, p. 594; cited from Rushdy, p. 1.

of the subject alone is not sufficient to make a travel-book an ever-lasting literary product. "If the subject in itself is sufficiently unusual or sensational, [the traveller] may rest assured of a grateful public, at least among his contemporaries . . . even with a minimum of literary skill and exertion on his part. In his case his literary achievement is very small, and his work will at best survive only into later ages as a curiosity, or a source of documentary information."<sup>1</sup> It is the traveller's individual personality and literary power, shining throughout the account, that really give a lasting merit to a travel-book. In earlier times, when readers knew less about other parts of the world, their curiosity was satisfied by stories about completely, or partly, new areas, and they were ready to pardon a weak style, and wander with great patience through long and weary journeys under the traveller's guidance. But with the continuous development of technical science and modern means of communication, there will be hardly anything new left for a traveller to communicate to his readers. Then, the only books of travel that will survive will be those "in which the personality and literary power of the writer count for more than his theme, books which need not treat of anything new, but merely of something sufficiently unusual to provide an interesting topic for a writer who, in any case, would be interesting."<sup>2</sup> The third factor that contributes to the popularity of travel-books in general are the readers themselves. In reading a travel-book, the ordinary reader has only one desire: "to escape from the circumstances of his every-day life into a new glamorous world. The reader of travel-books is the supreme escapist."<sup>3</sup> Braaksma calls him "a pure romantic at heart," and refers to the literature of travel as "the crudest and the purest form of romantic literature."<sup>4</sup> This shows itself with particular clarity during the late eighteenth century, preceding the Romantic Movement. A strong passion for the picturesque possessed men of the time, and travellers with the taste for scenery went in search of the romantic and the picturesque.<sup>5</sup> Thus travel-books became "an important ingredient in the general ferment of the pre-Romantic period,

<sup>1</sup> Braaksma, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Kirkpatrick, p. 240.

<sup>3</sup> Braaksma, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ditto.

<sup>5</sup> Rushdy, p. 3.

satisfying a craving for remoteness both in space and in time.”<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the question of the indifference of literary history and criticism to travel-books, I have derived the following points from Braaksma's treatment of the subject:

1. While the enormous amplitude of travel-books is in itself forbidding, the literary value of the greater part of all this stupendous growth is almost nought. Merely being a traveller has been almost the first requisite for a writer of a travel-book. “Only when a traveller's literary ambition and talent are more or less proportionate to his love of travel can we expect that the result of his labours will be really worth while from the strictly literary point of view.”<sup>2</sup>

2. In the case of the majority of travel-books, where the writers are known rather as travellers than as authors,<sup>3</sup> critical interest is usually focused on their factual reliability, their documentary and historical importance, “and so the possibility of [their] literary import was hardly ever thought worthy of consideration.”<sup>4</sup>

3. As it is necessary for the critic, in order to achieve a critical appreciation of any product of literary art, to have a thorough knowledge of the particular subject chosen by the writer, so it is indispensable for a critic, reviewing a book of travel, to possess, besides literary taste, “a fairly extensive knowledge of the regions described by the traveller.”<sup>5</sup>

4. The literature of travel is hampered by a twofold restriction. In the first place, a writer of a travel-book has a very narrow scope of displaying his art: He has recourse only to the descriptive style. Even as a descriptive writer, his imagination is allowed but little freedom of play, lest his book should be condemned by later generations of travellers and readers. “If the author is hampered by this twofold restriction, the critic, on the other hand, who ventures to embark on a systematic treatment of the literature of travel, as he has to digest hundreds and hundreds of pages of nothing but description, must needs have or cultivate a special affection for the descriptive element in literature; otherwise his

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> Braaksma, pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> Kirkpatrick, p. 240.

<sup>4</sup> Braaksma, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ditto.

interest will speedily wane, and himself like a weary traveller will jog drowsily on, seeing and hearing nothing, and with only the end of the exhausting journey in his mind.”<sup>1</sup>

Since the common characteristic in all travel-books is the sense of “remoteness” and “otherness”, Braaksma states that the first point to be considered in a critical appreciation of a book of travel is connected with the answer to the following questions:

(1) “. . . To what extent does it carry us from the narrow limitations, the pettiness of every-day humdrum life? How is the atmosphere of the remote, the charm of the unusual brought about and enhanced?”<sup>2</sup>

This depends on two points: First, the individual description of the traveller, and his individual interpretation of reality, “with the greatest possible degree of authenticity.”<sup>3</sup> The second point is the traveller’s choice of matter, for things of general “curiosity” among the readers of one age differ from those of another. The traveller should also “understand when to prune and when to enlarge, where to omit and where to stress.”<sup>4</sup>

Considering the fact that there are other types of readers than the “escapist” and the “romantic”, types of readers, who, few as they may be, read not only for pleasure, but search laboriously after scholarly knowledge and learning, Braaksma becomes more precise in stating “the principal means to determine the value of the travel-book as a work of literary significance.” It is the consideration of two further questions:

(2) “What does a reader expect from [a travel-book], and to what extent is his expectation fulfilled?

(3) “What is its intrinsic value? What does it contribute to the sum of human experience and the cause of civilization?”<sup>5</sup>

Now if we turn to the body of English travel-books about the Arab Near East in the 18th century, and try to evaluate their literary merits according to the criteria discussed above, we shall

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ditto.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 8.



not obtain many happy results. With the exception of Pitts, Maundrell, and Bruce, who emerge significantly from the cast of other travellers, the rest hardly rouse in us any literary interest or appreciation. However, this does not diminish their historical and documentary value in studying the background of modern Anglo-Near Eastern relations.

The desire to enhance material welfare that characterized travellers of the seventeenth century was followed by the desire to add to the stock of human knowledge that dominated the Age of Reason. The majority of the travellers wrote prolifically about almost every external aspect of Near Eastern Life. It was a short-coming to leave anything that might be "of public interest" undiscussed in the elegantly illustrated "folios" or "quartos." The object of the majority of those travellers was to impart information and observations concerning the externals of people and things, which the writers laboriously collected, sometimes even at the cost of exposing their lives to all sorts of discomforts and dangers. As each epoch seeks a certain set of "curiosities" which the readers expect to find in the travellers' accounts, travellers of the 18th century sought to satisfy their readers at home by conveying much leisurely information concerning systems of government, revenues, trade, manners, religions, monuments of antiquity and costumes of the different peoples and minorities of the Near East. You can hardly find a gap from which to penetrate into the personality and individual character of the traveller. They stood in conformity with the spirit of the age: cool, reserved, impassionate and impersonal. To them, the greatest pleasure was the satisfaction of the mind, to learn more and accumulate heaps and heaps of knowledge and information, which they stuffed without order or selection in their prodigious works. Antiquarianism, which was patronized by the learned circles in England embodied in the Society of Antiquaries, the Dilettanti Society, and the Egyptian Club (in its short life), sent forth such travellers as Pococke, Shaw, Norden, Wood and Perry, who really contributed to a considerable degree in the revival of Egyptology and Hellenism in England. Pococke and Shaw were highly esteemed by contemporary scientific circles and by subsequent generations of readers and travellers. We still admire their objectivity, relative reliability and deep learning that extended

to every field of human knowledge. But their accounts are dry, formal and disinteresting from the strictly literary point of view. A reader seeking literary pleasure, would almost be choked under the rigidity and impersonality of the style. That individual charm that differentiates one style from another is unfortunately lacking. It is for this reason that Pococke and Shaw are remembered as travellers rather than as authors.

However, we can still appreciate the literary values of Pitts', Maundrell's and Bruce's works, though each for a different reason. Pitts' little book has enjoyed wide popularity, was printed several times and used by later travellers and scholars<sup>1</sup>. We still admire reading Pitts for two main reasons: the curiosity and singularity of his subject, and the individual style of the writer which reveals much about his person and tortured soul.

Pitts' story, the first of its kind in English, is that of the direct encounter with the heart of Islam: Mecca. The Moslems and their religion had become by the end of the 17th century an enigma that excited much of the public curiosity in Europe. The history of the relations between Christian Europe and the Moslem world, was one of continual animosities, bloodshed, and acts of piracy and enslavement. The North African corsairs remained a continual threat to Southern Europe right until the end of the 18th century, and the slave-trade was carried on by both sides, European as well as North African. Pitts not only gives a picture of the Kingdom of Algeria and the story of his long imprisonment there, but delivers a rare description of the Moslem pilgrimage (Ḥajj), of Mecca and Medina, and even of the inside of Al-Ka'bah. The curiosity and "sensation" of the subject alone were a sufficient warrant for the popularity of the book.

But this popularity is not due to the choice of the subject alone; for Pitts' personality and style have a considerable rôle to play as well. Though, like every writer of travel-book, restricted to the descriptive style, there is much of Pitts, the humane, the conscientious Christian and the honest observer in his style. We are caught by his simplicity of utterance and directness of speech. Without formality or affectation, we are told, in a compact way of expression,

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<sup>1</sup> See K. V. Zettersteen, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19; DNB.

about nearly everything of interest in Algeria, Egypt, and Arabia. Here is an example of his style, in which he does not *merely* describe, but, remaining loyal to the given facts, sheds over the picture much of his personal and individual character. In one word, he sees and reacts. It is worth quoting the following passage where he describes the multitudes of devoted Moslems in their state of *ihram* standing on the plain of 'Arafāt, the usual *wuḳūf* ceremony of Al-Ḥajj. It did not escape Pitts to hint at the weakness of human nature, and its surrender to the power of an awakening conscience:

It was a sight, able to pierce one's heart, to behold so many thousands in their garments of humility and mortification, with their naked heads, and cheeks watered with tears; and to hear their grievous sighs and sobs, begging earnestly for the remissions of their sins, promising newness of life, using a form of penitential expressions; and thus continuing for the space of four or five hours, viz. until the time of Acsham-nomas [sic.], which is to be performed about half an hour after sunset . . . After their solemn performance of their devotions thus at the Gibbel, they all at once receive that honourable title of Hagge from the . . . Imam, and are so stiled to their dying day. Immediately upon their receiving this name, the trumpet is sounded, and they all leave the hill and return for Mecca.<sup>1</sup>

Braaksma states that "a certain mental attitude with respect to the matter described is often characteristic of many travellers belonging to the same era and can be explained through the spiritual outlook particular to the civilization of that age." Thus, he justly considers that "the literature of travel . . . is often a faithful mirror of the state of civilization at almost every period of its development."<sup>2</sup> This applies particularly to Maundrell's account of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which reflects the stress on empiricism that gained ground at the end of the 17th century, and continued to influence the eighteenth. Locke's theory of knowledge, as coming only from sense experience and from reflection upon that experience, his writings and empirical methods of philosophic research, made him "the father of much sceptical thinking" in the 18th century.<sup>3</sup>

Maundrell's book remains interesting even to-day as a herald of this empirical sceptical way of thinking that was to dominate the eighteenth century, and replace the "high priori" road to metaphysical truth.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pitts, op. cit., p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> Braaksma, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> George Sherburn, chapter on: The Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1660-1789), in *A Literary History of England*, edited by Albert C. Baugh, London, 1948, p. 704.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 823-24.

Though Maundrell's style lacks individual colour, we still read his book with interest owing to his sober and orderly mind. He is precise and selective, and his book is by no means boring reading. His critical outlook in matters of religion and scriptural interpretation has already been discussed.<sup>1</sup>

On visiting the Dead Sea, he did not hesitate to dive into its waters to test what had already been said of it:

"The water of the lake was very limpid, and salt to the highest degree; and not only salt, but also extreme bitter and nauseous. Being willing to make an experiment to its strength, I went into it, and found it bore up my body in swimming with an uncommon force."

Looking for the "apples of Sodom, so much talked of", he

"neither saw, nor heard of any hereabout: nor was there any tree to be seen near the lake, from which one might expect such a kind of fruit; which induces me to believe that there may be a greater deceit in this fruit, than that which is usually reported of it; and that its very being as well as its beauty, is a fiction, only kept up, as my lord Bacon observes many other false notions are, because it serves for a good allusion, and helps the poets to similitude."<sup>2</sup>

But James Bruce remains, without rival, the only outstanding literary figure among our travellers, and deserves the title awarded to him as "the poet, and his work the epic, of African travel."<sup>3</sup> The story of Bruce's Travels to discover the sources of the Nile, told in five huge quarto volumes, has an unusual atmosphere which is peculiar only to itself. It is like a picture, dominated by Bruce's imposing personality standing out in relief, whereas the details of the visited countries and encountered potentates faintly appear in the background. Telling the story twelve years after the events had taken place made him see everything through the magnifying haze of memory, where his person was the character least forgotten, and thus was given an emphasis bordering on vanity and arrogance, which gave the book that unfavourable reception, though it remained a sensation for many years after its publication. In spite of the fact that later travellers vindicated Bruce's truthfulness, especially concerning statements that were mostly responsible for subsequent upbraidings and attacks, his story remains like a long parti-coloured dream told fresh after awakening.

Even when telling of powerful princes and mighty local chiefs,

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 151-52.

<sup>2</sup> Maundrell, pp. 85-7.

<sup>3</sup> DNB.

his personal vanity must shine through the bright and vivid description. In Egypt he won the friendship of Rizk, Ali Bey's private secretary, who believed in his superior science and ability to foresee the future. One night, Rizk sent after Bruce to meet the Bey. It was the first time he appeared before the dictator of Egypt:

The Bey was sitting upon a large sofa, covered with crimson-cloth of gold; his turban, his girdle, and the head of his dagger, all thick covered with fine brilliants; one in his turban, that served to support a spring of brilliants also, was among the largest I had ever seen. Ali Bey wanted to know about the war between Russia and the Turks, and asked me about the consequences of the war. I answered that the Turks would be beaten by sea and land wherever they presented themselves. But peace would be made, after much bloodshed, with little advantage to either party. The Bey clapped his hands together, and swore an oath in Turkish, then turned to Risk, who stood before him, and said: "That will be said indeed! but truth is truth, and God is merciful." <sup>1</sup>

A few days later, the Bey sent for him another time in the night:

He was ill directly after a meal, and was afraid someone had planned to poison him. I examined him and prescribed something to make him vomit, after which I proposed the drinking of coffee or a glass of good spirits. At hearing the latter, the Bey was surprised, and said very calmly: "Spirits! do you know I am a Mussulman?" "But I, Sir," said I, "am none. I tell you what is good for your body, and have nothing to do with your religion, or your soul." He seemed vastly diverted, and pleased with my frankness, and only said, "He speaks like a man." <sup>2</sup>

I shall quote another episode to point to Bruce's delight in his own prowess and reputation and in displaying his "eminently robust and racy humour." <sup>3</sup> When he and his servants arrived at Jidda, on their way to Abyssinia in April, 1769, they looked like "pirates" after having had a long and exhausting Red Sea passage. His servants took his baggage and instruments to the custom-house, while the Captain of the Sea at Jidda sent his servant to take him to the Bengal House. Without revealing his real identity, he was kindly received by a Captain Thornhill, who gave him food and bed, taking him for a lost English vagabond. In the meantime, the Visier, or the governor of Jidda, fell to Bruce's baggage thinking they were a rich prey, and attached great hopes to their contents. "As his men opened the boxes by the hind hinges, the first thing he saw was the firman of the Grand Signor, magnificently written and powdered with gold. Then came letters directed to the Sharif of Mecca, and others to Metical Aga, sword-bearer of the Sharif,

<sup>1</sup> Bruce, vol. I, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Ditto.

<sup>3</sup> DNB.

or his great minister and favourite. At last he saw a letter from Ali Bey to himself, written with all the superiority of a prince to a slave. Ali Bey told him plainly, that he heard the governments of Judda, Mecca, and other states of the Sharif, were disorderly, and that merchants, coming on their lawful business, were plundered, terrified, and detained. He therefore intimated to him, that if any such thing happened to me he should not write to complain, but he would send and punish the affront at the very gates of Mecca. This was very unpleasant language to the Visier, because it was now publicly known, that Mahomet Bey Abou Dahab was preparing next year to march against Mecca, for some offence the Bey had taken at the Sherriffe."<sup>1</sup>

This was more than the Visier could expect. He quickly nailed the boxes, mounted his horse, and came to the Bengal houses attended by a number of naked black guards. On this occasion the whole factory took alarm, thinking it might have been an action directed against the resident English traders. Inquiries were made everywhere in search of the English nobleman, mentioned and highly recommended by this number of powerful people. Somebody, pointing to Bruce, said his servant was waiting in the house. Bruce, having been taken for the prominent Englishman's servant, was questioned by the prince of the port, and then by the Visier himself, about his supposed master:

... I told him, I did not know the purport of his question, that I was the person to whom the baggage belonged, which he had taken to the custom-house, and that it was in my favour the Grand Signor and the Bay had written. He seemed very much surprised, and asked me how I could appear in such a dress.

With English coldness, coloured by an individual imperiousness typical to Bruce's character, he answered:

"You cannot ask that seriously . . . I believe no prudent man would dress better, considering the voyage I have made. But, besides, you did not leave it in my power, as every article, but what I have on me, has been these four hours at the custom-house, waiting your pleasure."<sup>2</sup>

To the mentality of the eighteenth-century, Bruce's accentuated self-assertion, pomposity, and wild imagination were strongly repelling, and to the self-composed, rational 18th century reader, the truthful details of Bruce's adventurous, and highly risky

<sup>1</sup> Bruce, vol. I, pp. 272-3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. 274-5.

*Travels*, seemed bordering on empty boastfulness. But his influence on imaginative poetry of the late 18th and early 19th centuries was by no means insignificant. The picturesque description of Abyssinia, the hazardous desert return-journey through Nubia, the vivid picture he drew of the Simoom and desert-whirlwinds remained sources of inspiration for many poets, as will be shown below.

Apart from Pitts' singularity of subject, Maundrell's representation of empiricism and skepticism and Bruce's dominating energy and self-confidence, that made their books interesting reading, it might be worth while to pass a few remarks on the literary value of the works of a few other travellers.

Aaron Hill exemplifies the type of traveller who fails both as traveller and author by his unrestrained play of imagination, allowing his fancy to invent situations incompatible with the truth, and describing things which have no existence at all. It is permissible and even desirable in a traveller to use his imagination in displaying his personal reflections on and impressions of the perceived truths, but to convert those truths themselves or depart from adhering to them is committing a blunder that is not to be forgiven. Though Hill's narrative style gets hold of the reader's interest, one notices the affected exertion of a school-adolescent attempting to be thrilling and melodramatic. The traveller expects us to believe the story of a supposed exploration of the Great pyramid with the Pasha of Cairo, which led to the discovery of a secret underground passage between the Pyramid and the Sphinx:

At last, some men, belonging to the Great Bashaw, and famous masters of the art of architecture, as in fashion in the eastern countries, looking earnestly about the place, perceiv'd one stone, much smaller than the rest, and by the application of their irons, after many fruitless efforts, found it stir, and by repeated labours, so prevail'd at last, that they quite lifted it from out the place, it stood in, and by forcible addition of a doubled strength, quite thrust it from the hole, it stop'd.

But we had little reason to be pleas'd with this success, for in the very moment, that the stone was lifted out, there showr'd down on us such impetuous tides of rolling sand, that in the space of a half a minute, we were almost buried quick, and wholly overwhelm'd with its amazing violence.

No sooner was this sandy storm, and our surprise therat abated, but we open'd all our eyes; and found ourselves half swallow'd by it, yet those men, who stood the nearest to the hole, perceiv'd it wider at the top than bottom, and the stone, which fill'd it, being likewise so, had serv'd to stop it up effectually, and till then, prevented all that sand, which lay upon it from a possibility of entrance.

On either side of the hole, and rock below it, there were cut square nooks, wherein by thrusting hands and feet, a man, without great difficulty, might ascend, and by

those means we all got up, in order as we stood, and were beyond belief surpriz'd, not only to behold an open sky, which plainly shew'd us, that we were without the Pyramid, but to perceive ourselves within a spacious hollow on the lofty head of that great rock, which Pliny, and the other writers of antiquity, distinguish by the name of Sphinx.<sup>1</sup>

Campbell and Griffiths must have offered a special appeal to the taste of the late 18th century. Campbell's work in particular is more like intimate confessions to the readers. We are not only told about foreign countries, peoples and manners, but much about the traveller's innermost experiences in those areas; we almost hear the sobs of his broken heart. His disappointed unfulfilled love-affair with the young beautiful Englishwoman, who had been married to an old merchant in Aleppo, throws him in a melancholic mood throughout his journey with the Tartar guide from Aleppo to Baġdād. He shows skill at sentimental analysis and character drawing. Broken-hearted and crushed under the pains of unfulfilled love, his only consolation during this journey was to draw the character of the Tartar guide from very close observation and curious interest in his comical, bombastic personality. Though the Tartar filled him at first with awe by his fierce and stout appearance, he proved later to be a very kind and sympathetic man, very helpful and entertaining. Though devoid of adventures and impressive feats of prowess and repute as Bruce's *Travels* offer, Campbell's work remains a vivid picture of a sentimental, soft and crispy heart, and of a liberal and democratic mind. His statements on the Arabs and Turks, on the Moslem religion and Arab social life are not those of a traveller biased by an imperious mind and the thought of the superiority of Western to Eastern life, but of a liberal and unprejudiced bearer of late 18th century romanticism.

Griffiths had also several occasions to reveal his individual feelings, and, in one occasion, he betrays his deep sorrow at the loss of a dear friend. His style in describing the death of his friend who accompanied him with his little daughter on the desert journey to Baṣra bears strong traits of the 18th century pathos and sentimentality:

"With difficulty Joannes and myself supported my feeble friend to where the tent had been thrown down from the camel's back. He stammered out a question respecting the time of the day; to which I answered it was near four; and requesting the Arabs to hold over him part of the tent (to pitch it required too much time), I unpacked as speedily as possible our liqueur-chest, and hastened to offer him some Visnee (a kind

<sup>1</sup> Hill, op. cit., pp. 256-7.



of cherry-brandy): but nature was too much exhausted! I sat down, and receiving him in my arms, repeated my endeavours to engage him to swallow a small portion of the liqueur. All human efforts were vain! Gust after gust of pestilential air dried up the springs of life, and he breathed his last upon my bosom!

"Let the reader of sensibility reflect upon the concomitant circumstances which attended this afflicting scene, and then refer to the sensations which will be created in his own breast; to form some idea of those which must have lacerated mine! Let him paint to himself a traveller, of an age alive to every feeling, in the midst of the Desert of Arabia, with the corpse of his respected friend, burnt to the appearance of a cinder, black yet warm, on one side of him; and on the other, the daughter of that friend, the most angelic child that Nature ever formed, unconscious of her loss, and with the pattle of innocence inquiring "where her dear papa was gone to?" It was a scene as little to be supported as described; and the honest tears I shed bore ample testimony to the wounded sensibility of my heart."<sup>1</sup>

After this survey, are we justified in considering travel-books in general as forming a definite branch in the field of literature? Braaksma concludes in his study on *Travel and Literature* that "the literature of travel is a form of human expression which has a good right to be treated as literature."<sup>2</sup> In my opinion, the place that travel-books have taken in the history of literary development and their influence therein are too secondary and limited to justify this statement. It is true, travel-books will remain popular and covetously read as long as man retains his wanderlust and undying desire to tour foreign countries and meet with "other" peoples. Those who can afford it will travel around, the others will choose to devour the travel-book by the fireside. But the readers' desire to read travel-books does not actually exceed their passion for the newspaper. It is almost the same curiosity to be informed of new happenings, of "news" at home and "elsewhere." But is this popularity a sufficient warrant to give travel-literature and journalism "a good right to be treated as literature?" Even though a few travel-books have distinguished themselves as masterpieces of literature, this distinction is due to the intricate literary qualities of the writers in one limited field of human expression: the descriptive. There is much entertainment in a travel-book, but it lacks the exposition and treatment of human problems, whether individual or social, and, unlike authors of other literary fields, the writer of travel-literature is hardly given sufficient scope for literary and artistic creation. Yet, it would be unjust to deny completely any place for travel-books among other literary cate-

<sup>1</sup> Griffiths, 379.

<sup>2</sup> Braaksma, p. 113.

gories. But it must be stated that its rank remains modest and secondary.

However, the interest of literary criticism and literary history in travel books has been, as Braaksma states, "not so much with the intrinsic literary value of works of travel as with their influence on other, more highly valued, departments of literary art."<sup>1</sup> W. C. Brown sees that the wide popularity and general influence of Near Eastern travel-books (1775-1825) calls for a study of their contents and of their relationship to the other writings of the time as a necessary step for the literary history of the age of romanticism.<sup>2</sup> The importance of travel-books in general, therefore, lies not in their being works of literature, but in their contents as sources of influence and material for other fields of literature. The rest of this chapter, therefore, will be devoted for the study of Near Eastern travel material in the English literary production of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

It has been already mentioned<sup>3</sup> that the strongest oriental influence on English literature came from the tales of the Arabian Nights, which remained even for the travellers themselves the main source of information about the Near East and the Arabs in general. During the 18th century, the Arabian Nights ran through at least thirty editions in English and French.<sup>4</sup> In an age, when writers like Defoe, Steele, and Addison were seeking for a new style, the Arabian Nights, though lacking all the finer elements of literary art, possessed a very important element in popular literature, the spirit of adventure. "It is not over-rash to suggest that it supplied the clue for which the popular writers were searching, and that but for the *Nights* there would have been no *Robinson Crusoe*, and perhaps no *Gulliver's Travels*".<sup>5</sup> Thus, a series of oriental tales and imitations of the Arabian Nights appeared throughout the 18th century, and continued to inspire authors and fascinate readers right to the middle of the 19th.<sup>6</sup> But travellers

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, Popularity etc., p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> See above pp. 136 and 140.

<sup>4</sup> H. A. R. Gibb, chapter on Literature in *The Legacy of Islam*, edited by Sir Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume, Oxford, 1952, p. 180.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 201.

<sup>6</sup> See Martha Pike Conant, *The Oriental Tale in England in the 18th Century*, New York, 1908, pp. 1-72; de Meester, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

of the 18th century too, who brought with them first true, though matter-of-fact, accounts of the Near East, also had their share in supplying poets and men of letters with new material and inspiring them with ideas and images which the poets used and revealed under new lights. Those accounts and the charm of the Arabian Nights soon gave birth to that 'romantic' image of the East, "warm-coloured, exotic, and mysterious." <sup>1</sup>

Lowes, in his celebrated study in the ways of the imagination <sup>2</sup>, tries to capture the secret of the charm which travellers somehow communicated to their style. In addition to a racy individuality of phrase and diction which characterises travel-books of renown, <sup>3</sup> there is another common trait in their language which is inseparable from the nature of their adventurous undertaking. It is the way they have of clothing the very stuff and substance of romance in the homely, direct, and everyday terms of plain matter of fact. "They sailed into regions of the fantastically new, and had words, for the most part, for accustomed things alone. And so the strange assumed perforce the guise of the familiar, and the familiar terms took on enchanting connotations through their involuntary commerce with the strange . . . an old friend with a new face . . ." <sup>4</sup> The charm of the description of new-found lands and marvels is heightened by recurring reminders of wonted and familiar things. Our imagination is conveyed into delights by the travellers' tricks of catching glimpses of known and familiar landscape through the strangest lights.

The travel-books contained "... facts saturated in the imagery which memory brought to it; always simple, always sensuous, sometimes (in the word's old import) even passionate; the very stuff of poetry, awaiting only the touch of the shaping spirit to transmute it into poetry itself." <sup>5</sup>

Let us now follow the traces of our travellers' accounts in the three fields of literature: poetry, fiction and drama.

### *Traces in Poetry* <sup>6</sup>

Bruce's Travels won a wide popularity at the end of the 18th century, and were the source of inspiration for more than one poet. Lowes, in his *Road to Xanadu* traced the sources which filled Coleridge's deep store of images and vivid pictures revealed in his two great poems, *The Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan*. James Bruce played no inferior part in this respect, and his Travels were a story of fascination to the poet, who even recommended it to one of his

<sup>1</sup> Gibb, op. cit., p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> John Livingston Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu*, New York, 1930.

<sup>3</sup> Best examples among our travellers: Bruce, Pitts and Maundrell.

<sup>4</sup> Lowes, 312-14.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 322-23.

<sup>6</sup> See above pp. 108 ff.

close friends as 'a book that you ought by all means to have'.<sup>1</sup>

His first use of Bruce may be traced in his *'Religious Musings'*, dated Christmas Eve, 1794, and stated explicitly by the poet himself in a footnote to line 269.<sup>2</sup> It was the picture that Bruce had depicted of the Simoom, that remained vivid in Coleridge's memory and contributed to the birth of the following lines:

"Fitliest depicted by some sun-scorched waste,  
Where oft majestic through the tainted noon  
The Simoom sails, before whose purple pomp  
Who falls not prostrate dies!"<sup>3</sup>

Bruce's description of the Simoom, copied literally by Coleridge in his footnote, reads:

"At eleven o'clock, while we contemplated with great pleasure the rugged top of Chiggre, to which we were fast approaching, and where we were to solace ourselves with plenty of good water. Idris cried out, with a loud voice, 'Fall upon your faces, for here is the Simoom.' I saw from the S.E. an haze come in, in colour like the purple part of the rainbow, but not so compressed or thick. It did not occupy twenty yards in breadth, and was about twelve feet high from the ground . . . We all lay flat on the ground as if dead, till Idris told us it was blown over. The meteor, or purple haze, which I saw, was indeed passed; but the light air that still blew was of heat to threaten suffocation."<sup>4</sup>

To picture the absence of twilight in the tropics in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Coleridge consulted Bruce among other sources on the Nile and the West Indies,<sup>5</sup> and the impressions from his reading are reflected in his verse:

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:  
At one stride comes the dark;  
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,  
Off shot the spectre-bark.<sup>6</sup>

The words he read in Bruce were: "In countries such as . . . Hanno was sailing by . . . there is no twilight. The stars, in their full brightness, are in possession of the whole heavens, when in an instant the sun appears without harbinger, and they all disappear

<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Wordsworth in a letter to Lady Beaumont published in "Memorials of Coleorton, Being Letters from Coleridge, Wordsworth and his Sister, Southey, and Sir Walter Scott to Sir George and Lady Beaumont of Coleorton, Leicestershire, 1803 to 1834. Edited . . . by William Night. Boston and New York, 1887, vol. I, p. 221; quoted from Lowes, note 32, p. 495.

<sup>2</sup> The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. 2 vols, edited by Ernest Hartley Coleridge. Oxford, 1912, vol. I, pp. 118-19.

<sup>3</sup> Lines 267-70.

<sup>4</sup> James Bruce, op. cit., vol. iv, 557.

<sup>5</sup> Lowes, 161-62.

<sup>6</sup> *Poetical Works*, op. cit., p. 195, lines 199-202.

together . . . But no sooner does the sun set, than a cold night instantly succeeds a burning day.”<sup>1</sup>

The same observation on the tropical absence of the twilight recurs in Bruce: “The twilight . . . is very short, almost imperceptible. As soon as the sun falls below the horizon, night comes on, and all the stars appear.”<sup>2</sup>

Bruce was also one of the sources to supply Coleridge’s imagination with the picture of the star-dogged moon. The poet must have read in the great account how in Abyssinia “a star passing near the horus of the moon denotes the coming of an enemy.”<sup>3</sup> He certainly had read the same observation in other travel-accounts too, and his fascinating lines read:

From the sails the dew did drip—  
Till clomb above the eastern bar  
The hornéd Moon, with one bright star  
Within the nether tip.  
One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,  
Too quick for groan or sigh,  
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,  
And cursed me with his eye.”<sup>4</sup>

Again, the picture of lightning streaming on the ground like liquid was caught from Bruce and others, and reappeared on the poet’s tongue. Bruce’s picture: ‘sheets of lightning, which ran on the ground like water,’<sup>5</sup> and Coleridge’s:

Like waters shot from some high crag,  
The lightning fell with never a jag,  
A river steep and wide.<sup>6</sup>

In *Kubla Khan*, that perpetual dream of romance and fantasy, there is much Bruce, and the atmosphere and pictures are those of his Abyssinia.<sup>7</sup> The ‘sacred river’ is none but the Nile; and the birth of that ‘mighty fountain’ out of ‘the romantic chasm’ amid the enchanted green, reminds one vividly of Bruce’s passage describing what he had taken to be the sources of the Nile. That thrilling moment, which disclosed to Bruce the oldest riddle on earth, meant

<sup>1</sup> Bruce, op. cit., ii, 565; cited by Lowes, 161-2.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce, iii, 353; Lowes, *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Bruce, ii, 554; cited by Lowes, 183.

<sup>4</sup> *Poetical Works*, I, 195-6, lines 208-15.

<sup>5</sup> Bruce, iii, 448; Lowes, 187.

<sup>6</sup> *Poetical Works*, I, p. 199, lines 324-26.

<sup>7</sup> Though de Meester gives the scene of the poem to have happened in Abyssinia, she does not recognize the influence of Bruce on Coleridge. See de Meester, op. cit., p. 22.

to him the climax of his life and whole being. For there lay the sources of the Nile in "an island of green turf, which was in form of an altar, apparently the work of art, and [he] stood in rapture over the principal fountain which rises in the middle of it." This passage, expressed with Bruce's colourful words exercised a far-reaching effect on Coleridge's imagination, which can be more closely examined by comparing the poem with Bruce's words.<sup>1</sup>

Another poet, Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), made use of Bruce's Travels in his poetic work, *The Botanic Garden (The Economy of Vegetation)*, which appeared in 1799.<sup>2</sup> This work, which is less poetry than natural history, is heavily loaded with notes and philosophical remarks, among which there are three quotations from Bruce, and one reference to Shaw.<sup>3</sup>

To the following lines:

Wide wastes of sand the gelid gales pervade,  
And ocean cools beneath the moving slade,<sup>4</sup>

Darwin notes this passage quoted from Bruce:

"When the sun is in the southern tropic 36 deg. distant from the Zenith, the thermometer is seldom lower than 72 deg. at Gonder in Abyssinia, but it falls to 60 or 53 deg. when the sun is immediately vertical; so much does the approach of rain counteract the heat of the sun."<sup>5</sup>

Bruce's fascinating description of the desert whirl-winds, and travelling pillars of sand is referred to in the footnote to the following lines:

"Now o'er their head the whizzing whirlwinds breathe,  
And the live desert pants, and leaves beneath;  
Tinged by the crimson sun, vast columns rise  
Of eddying sands, and war amid the skies,  
In red arcades the billowy plain surround,  
And whirling turrets stalk along the ground."<sup>6</sup>

Bruce's account of the Simoom had attracted his attention before Coleridge, and it was his note that led the latter to this passage in the great Travels.<sup>7</sup> His lines on this theme read:

<sup>1</sup> Lowes, pp. 370-75; *Poetical Works*, I, 297; Bruce, iii, 596-7, also 619-20.

<sup>2</sup> Erasmus Darwin, M. D.: *The Botanic Garden, A Poem*, in two parts: *The Economy of Vegetation and The Loves of the Plants*. London, 1824.

<sup>3</sup> See above p. 98.

<sup>4</sup> Darwin, op. cit., *The Economy of Vegetation*, Canto I, line 547.

<sup>5</sup> Bruce, iii, 670.

<sup>6</sup> Darwin, Canto ii, lines 473-8; compare Bruce, iv, 553-5.

<sup>7</sup> Lowes, 495, note 31.

Sylphs! your bold myriads on the withering heath  
 Stay the fell Syroc's suffocative breath;  
 Arrest simoom in his realms of sand,  
 The poison'd javelin balanced in his hand;—  
 Fierce on blue streams he rides the tainted air,  
 Points his keen eye, and waves his whistling hair;  
 While, as he turns, the undulating soil  
 Rolls in red waves, and bilowy deserts boil.<sup>1</sup>

There is one reference to Thomas Shaw<sup>2</sup> too in the lines concerning the exhalation of volcanic vapours, especially noticed in the Jordan valley.<sup>3</sup>

Another poet who was inspired by the Orient, and had recourse to travel-books for the composition of his oriental epics was Robert Southey. At a very early age, when he was about fifteen, he was greatly interested in a book called *Religious Ceremonies* by Picart.<sup>4</sup> His imagination was strongly impressed by the book, and he decided to exhibit "all the more prominent and poetical forms of mythology which have at any time obtained among mankind, by making each the ground work of an heroic poem."<sup>5</sup> Thus his long poem *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801), was the first epic of this plan, and displays the Moslem religion. Southey spent years studying and collecting material for this poem, and an almost innumerable quantity of travel-books form the main part of his reading, as is plainly shown in his copious notes and commentaries.<sup>6</sup> From the notes alone we recognize the importance of travel-books on the Near East in forming the background of Southey's *Thalaba*. He refers to Thomas Shaw in 13 different places in the poem.<sup>7</sup> There are three references to each of Pococke,<sup>8</sup> Bruce,<sup>9</sup> Russell,<sup>10</sup> and Jackson.<sup>11</sup> Irwin too is quoted

<sup>1</sup> Darwin, Canto iv, lines 63-70.

<sup>2</sup> Shaw, op. cit., p. 374-5.

<sup>3</sup> —Sylph'. in what dread array with pennons broad  
 Onward ye floated o'er the ethereal road,  
 Called each dark steam the reeking marsh exhales,  
 Contagious vapours, and volcanic gales . . . etc. (Canto iv, lines 303-308).

<sup>4</sup> Albrecht Wächter, *Über Robert Southey's Orientalische Epen*, Diss. Halle, 1890; de Meester, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> De Meester, ditto.

<sup>6</sup> I have used *The Poetical Works of Robert Southey*, Paris, 1829.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pp. 156, 157, 157-8, 158, 168, 165, 165, 170, 172, 173, 174, 179, and 188.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pp. 148-9, 152, and 155.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pp. 162, 164-5, and 164.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, pp. 157, 168 and 183.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, pp. 156, 169 and 183.

twice.<sup>1</sup> There is also one reference to each of Pitts,<sup>2</sup> Norden,<sup>3</sup> and Griffiths.<sup>4</sup>

Like Southey, Thomas Moore was greatly interested in reading Oriental literature, translations, and travel-books. He was so much immersed in the Oriental atmospheres, that his Oriental poems, though less read to-day, have the appearance of having been written by a man who has spent many long years in the East. What concerns us here is his *Lalla Rookh* (1817), as being to a large extent based on information mostly derived from Travel-books on the Near East. Like Southey and Darwin, Moore loaded this poem with many notes and references, which mostly point to Near Eastern travellers.<sup>5</sup> He must have read nearly the same books as Southey, and, again, we can see from the notes his reliance on information gained mostly from 18th-century travellers to the Near East. There are 7 quotations from Russell,<sup>6</sup> 3 from Bruce,<sup>7</sup> 2 each from Shaw,<sup>8</sup> Pitts,<sup>9</sup> and Perry<sup>10</sup> and one reference each to Norden,<sup>11</sup> Aaron Hill,<sup>12</sup> Wittman,<sup>13</sup> and Maundrell.<sup>14</sup> The fall of moisture in Egypt during the month of June and its healing effect against the plague is a fact observed by nearly all English travellers to Egypt. This is again used by Moore in the following lines:

"There's a drop," said the Peri, "that down from the moon  
Falls through the withering air of June  
Upon Egypt's land, of so healing a power,  
So baling a virtue, that ev'n in the hour  
That drop descends, contagion dies,  
And health re-animates earth and skies!—<sup>15</sup>

Moore comments on that with the following: "The Nucta, or Miraculous Drop, which falls in Egypt precisely on St. John's day,

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, pp. 165 and 182.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 161.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 188-9.

<sup>5</sup> I have used Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, Tauchnitz Pocket Library No. 61, Leipzig, ...?

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pp. 204, 231, 269, 298, 307, 309.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pp. 219, 263 and 268.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pp. 204, 285-6.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pp. 206, 226.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, pp. 262, 336.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 237.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 271.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 313.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 347.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, pp. 272-3.



in June, and is supposed to have the effect of stopping the plague.”<sup>1</sup>

In the following pages I can give only a few hints to further influences of travel accounts on literary productions in England. They may help investigators who want to make a full study of these relations which so far have not been an object of research.

Elements that come partly from the Travel-books, but mainly from Egyptian pieces of sculpture and monuments that were shipped to England after the British campaign in Egypt, are to be traced in Shelley's *Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude* (1816), and Keats' *Hyperion* (1818-19).<sup>2</sup> Some verses of Shelley's poem remind us of a host of Near Eastern travellers—it suffices to mention Maundrell, Pococke, Wood, Norden and Bruce:

His wandering step,  
Obedient to high thoughts, has visited  
The awful ruins of the days of old:  
Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the waste  
where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers  
Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,  
Memphis and Thebes, and what soe'er of strange  
Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,  
Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphynx,  
Dark Aethiopia in her desert hills  
Conceals.<sup>3</sup>

Keats, who often visited the British Museum, and watched the colossus of Memnon there, and who must have dipped into English travel-books about Egypt, and seen travellers—plates and illustrations of Egyptian monuments, reveals this Egyptian background in some parts of his *Hyperion*.<sup>4</sup>

### *Traces in Fiction*

The stream of Oriental tales that appeared during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, were more influenced by the Arabian Nights, and other similar translations from Arabic, Persian or Turkish than by the accounts of Near Eastern travellers. Nevertheless, the travel-books were sometimes consulted for local colours and manners. Martha P. Conant<sup>5</sup> has already shown the influence

<sup>1</sup> Ditto.

<sup>2</sup> Helen Darbishire: Keats and Egypt, in *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 3, No. 9. Jan. 1927, pp. 1-11.

<sup>3</sup> Shelley's *Alastor*, or *The Spirit of Solitude*, lines 106-16.

<sup>4</sup> Darbishire, op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Conant, op. cit.

of the *Arabian Nights*, and Beckford's *Vathek*<sup>1</sup> in a number of Oriental and pseudo-oriental tales of the 18th century, and pointed out to the growing popularity of travel-books as sources of material about the Near East after 1800.<sup>2</sup>

In 1769 a realistic story, which strongly reminds of Pitts' account of his long captivity in Algiers, appeared in London under the title of: *The Female Captive: A Narrative of Facts*, which happened in Barbary, in the year 1756. Written by herself. The story, which may be a true one,<sup>3</sup> has the same background fashionable in the long series of North African piratic accounts started by Pitts' experience in Algeria.

Isaac Disraeli's *Mejnoun and Leila* (1800) is a tale which points more to the writer's use of Near Eastern travels. Following the examples of Moore and Southey, Disraeli appended to his tale a considerable number of explanatory notes to verify the details of his Oriental picture, and referred to a good number of travellers.

His description of the terrible desert sand storms leads to the conjecture that he had used Bruce's description which was also used by Darwin.<sup>4</sup> Disraeli refers to Pococke in a point concerning the marking of a trail in the desert by erecting a number of pillars across the plain.<sup>5</sup>

Thomas Moore's *The Epicurean* (1827) describes the spiritual evolution of Alciphron, a young Greek philosopher in the reign of the emperor Valerian, from Epicurianism to Christianity. As the story takes place in Egypt, and among its temples, Moore, to give a vivid local colour for mere decorative purposes, draws his information from a host of travellers among whom are: Edward D. Clarke, Bruce, Hamilton, W. G. Browne, and Shaw.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Beckford, *History of the Caliph Vathek*, 1786.

<sup>2</sup> Conant, pp. 255-6.

<sup>3</sup> The copy at the British Museum carries the following entry, probably written by Sir W. Musgrave: "This is a true story. The lady's maiden name was Marsh. She married Mr. Crisp, as related in the following narrative, but he, having failed in business, went to India, while she remained with her father . . . during which she wrote and published these little volumes . . . The book having, as it is said, been bought up by the lady's friends, is become very scarce." See also Halkett and Laing, *Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous English Literature*.

<sup>4</sup> W. C. Brown: *Prose Fiction and English Interest in the Near East 1775-1825*, PMLA, 53, 1938, pp. 827-36.

<sup>5</sup> Disraeli's *Mejnoun and Leila*, 1800, p. 103; Brown, *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> W. C. Brown: *Thomas Moore and English Interest in the East—Studies in Philology*, 34, 1937, pp. 576-88.

*Traces in Drama*

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries dozens of plays about the Near East were produced.<sup>1</sup> More than 100 of these plays are appended to Allardyce Nicoll's *History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama*,<sup>2</sup> and a *History of Early Nineteenth Century Drama*,<sup>3</sup> and seem to have enjoyed wide popularity among the audiences of that time. Great care was given to fidelity in the creation of costume, scenery, and setting, owing to the increasing popularity of Near Eastern travel-books.<sup>4</sup> In addition to the melodramas, which were either musical, or melodramatic in the 'gothic' sense, there were heroic tragedies, and the drama of 'sensibility'.<sup>5</sup> But the most important plays about the Near East are the melodramas. Despite their melodramatic character, these plays reveal the dominating realistic interest in the Near East. Their sources, as is shown by Brown, were: 1. popular English poems about the Near East, 2. contemporary Near Eastern events, and 3. actual accounts of that region in travel-books.<sup>6</sup> The poems that form the background of some of these plays, were themselves based on travel accounts. Among them, it is worth mentioning Edward Fitzball's *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1822), and Michael O'Sullivan's dramatization of Moore's *Lalla Rookh* (1818).

The most outstanding event that drew the attention of English public opinion to the Near East, was the victory of the English campaign in Egypt, especially the victory of the Nile. A number of plays emphasising the theme of English valour and patriotism ensued, and the name of Nelson became associated with Egypt and the Nile. In this connection, it is worth mentioning as an example Thomas Dibdin's musical farce, *The Mouth of the Nile* (1798). Though a trivial play, it capitalizes ingeniously on English patriotism put under examination. Another play, noteworthy for its realistic Near Eastern costumes and scenery, was Andrew Franklin's 'opera', *The Egyptian Festival* (1800). The gallantry of

<sup>1</sup> W. C. Brown: The Near East in English Drama, 1775-1825—*Journal of English and German Philology*, 46, 1947, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> Cambridge, 1927.

<sup>3</sup> Cambridge, 1930.

<sup>4</sup> Brown's *The N.E. in English Drama*, p. 64.

<sup>5</sup> Ditto.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 65.

the British commander in Egypt, Abercrombie, is exhibited in *Harlequin Mameluke* (1801) whose set-designers went directly to travel-books (Savary, Volney and Bruce), as is shown by the *Monthly Mirror* of 1801.<sup>1</sup>

It is significant that in 1802 a Near East traveller, Eyles Irwin, wrote a prose comedy himself, based on his observations and travels in Arabia, Egypt and Syria. In the preface to *The Bedouins, or Arabs of the Desert*, Irwin remarks: "In delineating the manners and dispositions of remote nations, it is difficult for a traveller, with every attention to truth, to escape censure. It is in vain that he faithfully reflects the impression made on his mind at that instant; that unprejudiced by education, and unawed by high authorities, he gives the uncivilized stranger the full credit, which generous sentiments and actions deserve. Critical acumen has fixed a standard for itself; and exclaims against the least deviation from what—while trusting to as fallible evidence—it has persuaded itself to be the real fact."<sup>2</sup>

From these words we can tell the difficulty of changing the prevailing prejudiced ideas about the Arabs that dominated the 18th century, and died out in the 19th. The play centres around the Arabian custom of hospitality to strangers, and, to convince the English public of the necessity of changing its concept of the Arab character, Irwin offers his own travel experiences as evidence.

So far, we have seen the extent to which travel-books have been used as sources of information and colouring in poems, tales and plays about the Near East during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It is the period in which the Oriental, or rather the Near Eastern background was used for decorative and formal purposes alone, whereas the contents were mainly European. The Orient that the literature of the period revealed and depicted was "an Orient which the romantic imagination of the time refashioned after its own ideas and peopled with grotesque figures clothed in the garb of caliphs, kadis, and jinns."<sup>3</sup> An Oriental literary product of this period was like a European, with an Arabian garment and turban. The travel-books helped to supply information

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xi (June, 1801) p. 413; quoted from Brown, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> *The Bedouins*, pp. v-vi; quoted from Brown, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Gibb, op. cit., p. 200.

for a local touch here, some Oriental manners there, and a general colouring of a Near Eastern scene.

## CONCLUSION

English (and in fact European) interest in the Near East came with the rise and spread of Islam all over the lands associated with the Holy Scriptures, as an antagonist religion to medieval Christianity, and this interest found its expression in the waves of pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Those pilgrimages took a peaceful character at the beginning, but later became militant and resulted in the short-lived Crusader-states in Syria and Palestine. The routes of the early pilgrims in the eastern Mediterranean were taken over as fixed routes by succeeding generations of travellers. The discovery of the rich Indian and Far Eastern merchandise by the mercantile adventurers and navigators of the 16th and 17th centuries revived the ancient importance of the Near East as a bridge of communication and mediation between Europe and the East. The establishment of the Levant Company in 1583 with its centre in Constantinople and several consulates and counters in Syria, Egypt and North Africa supplied fairly good measures of security and help for English travellers to this area, who were mainly keen on material and mercantile profits and activities. With this relative security a new type of traveller began to appear on the Near Eastern stage, the traveller who was thirsty for knowledge and curious to know more of the "other", Eastern, world that was rivalling the Christian West. The accounts reveal much classical erudition and little contact with the people and contemporary conditions of the toured lands.

It is in the 18th century that we have to look for the beginning of a rather wide and variegated English travel movement to the Arab Near East. To the English travellers of this century is due the establishment of modern contacts between England and this area. The travellers differed in the standards of their learning and education, as well as in their intrinsic characters as travellers. They have been treated under six different aspects:

1. There were those who extended the scope of the grand tour, that favourite instructive journey of the 18th century, over Greece, Turkey, Syria and Egypt.

2. The accounts of residents in the Near East—chaplains, consuls, physicians, agents and traders of the Levant Company as well as missionaries who had spent several years in Syria and Egypt, and knew the country well and partly mastered the Arabic language. The Levant Company with its capitulations enabled a rather large number of Englishmen to settle at Aleppo, for many years, and write the earliest accounts on the Levant covering several fields of information: Natural history, local diseases, the Eastern Church, the Eastern sects, etc.

3. A relatively large number of travellers crossed the desert route (Aleppo-Baṣra) on their way to India and left highly interesting accounts of this important route of ancient trade and civilization. The descriptions of ruins and watering places which lay across this route are evidences of the flourishing activity of by-gone times and peoples.

4. There was also a group of travellers who vainly attempted, under hazardous conditions, and against the will of the Ottoman Empire, to establish another route to the East—via Egypt and the Red Sea. A leading figure who may claim the title of “Father of the Red Sea route” is Baldwin. He, better informed and more far-sighted than his own government, attempted in vain to draw the attention of the English government to the great strategic importance of Egypt in connection with India, and to convince it of the future utilities of opening a Red Sea connection between the Indian waters and the Mediterranean. Napoleon’s campaign against Egypt at once proved the truth of Baldwin’s anticipations concerning the agile activities of the French agents in the Near East.

5. With the growing interest in antiquarianism (Egyptology and Hellenistic Studies) and geographical explorations (especially of Central Africa), patronized by different societies and clubs founded during the 18th century (The Society of Antiquaries, 1718, the Dilettanti Society, 1734, the Egyptian Society, 1740, and the Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior of Africa, 1788), another group of travellers left their homeland, and undertook dangerous and tedious journeys exploring the Nile, Egyptian temples and monuments, the hieroglyphs, and another traveller, Wood, gave the first description and drawings of the tremendous ruins of Palmyra, bride of the desert, and the first detailed history

and plans of the temple of Baalbek. It is these people in fact, travellers like Shaw, Norden, Pococke, Wood and Bruce, that first awoke the interest of the following century in Egyptology and the close study of the archaeology and civilization of the Near East.

6. While the mercantile activities of the Levant Company were fading out at the end of the 18th century, and while Britain's conviction in the futility of Near Eastern trade blinded her to the strategic importance of Egypt as a stronghold of India, Napoleon was planning to make Egypt the base from which he could direct his blow at British India. The Napoleonic campaign against Egypt was a surprise even to the sharp-eyed and alert-minded Nelson; but it was successfully checked by British naval and military operations which ended with the French evacuation and a short period of Anglo-Turkish administration. A number of travel-accounts were written either by people who took part in the British operations in Egypt or by travellers who visited Egypt under the commission or protection of the British army in Alexandria. The Napoleonic and subsequent British campaigns close a chapter, and open a new one in the history of European-Near Eastern relations in general, and Anglo-Egyptian in particular. Not only the face of contemporary Egypt was disclosed, but the mystery of ancient Egypt and its hieroglyphs as well.

The majority of the travellers visited the Near East occasionally, en route to India. The number of travellers to or from India far exceeds the number of other types of travellers. Those along the Desert Route amount to 16 and those along the Overland route amount to 5. This proves two facts:

1. That the English were mainly interested in India and Indian trade, and that the Near East was to them only a route of communication. This may be attributed to the inability of the British to seize a firmer footing in the area owing to other European (mainly French) rivalries and intrigues at the Ottoman Porte, which was aiming at preserving a balance of power. After the discovery of the route around the Cape of Good Hope, the English lost interest in conveying Oriental goods across the old Near Eastern routes, especially after they had become tedious, insecure and precarious.

2. Though the importance of the Near Eastern routes decreased after the discovery of the sea-route round the Cape, there remained

an incessant demand for rapid communication between the East India Company and England. Despatches of importance and urgency were, thus, sent across the Syrian desert, whereas a man like Baldwin was struggling hopelessly and helplessly to initiate a new route—that of the Red Sea—as the shortest between India and the Mediterranean.

Thus we find that the English interest in the Near East during the 18th century was mainly secondary and judged more or less by purely mercantile and utilitarian considerations. It was only the Napoleonic scheme that made the English change their outlook and attitude, and that brought the Near East into the foreground and made it important for British interests during the 19th century.

However, the travel-accounts of the 18th century, whether written by men of the East India Company or by travellers who were actually interested in the Levant, still retain a special importance in the history of civilization. They are the earliest accounts that really paved the way for the modern English travel movement to the Near East, and they were the first relatively reliable source of information for the English public about this area. The main criticism to be directed against those accounts is their formalism, detachedness and matter-of-factness. Apart from few exceptions, most of the travel descriptions hardly reveal any personal colour or impression, and, instead, contain accumulations of information that seemed to be interesting for an 18th century rational mind, searching for knowledge and bits of learning, without caring to reflect any personal or human reaction towards this huge body of learning. So, far from sifting and selecting their material, the authors bring in everything that caught their eye or struck them as noteworthy, however trifling or incoherent it might be.

There are general characteristics common among the majority of the travel books. They reveal a strong dependence on classical authors especially in their eruditions on Egyptian antiquities and hieroglyphs, and in their remarks on the geography and natural history of the Near East. Many statements uttered by classical authors are copied and repeated by the travellers without criticism or examination. Just to give an example, almost every traveller repeated, with classical reference, the statement that Egypt was the mother of all science and learning. Wood was the



only traveller—who, surpassing his generation, raised strong doubts about the truth of this judgment.

Observing that conditions and manners in the Holy Lands hardly changed from what they were in the Biblical times, many travellers in Syria and Palestine used their travel observations to interpret the Holy Scriptures, elucidate Scriptural ambiguities and draw comparisons and parallels. Under the same conviction, one traveller, Wood, attempted to make use of his Egyptian and Syrian travels to make a new and celebrated study of the original genius of Homer, the background of whose pictures was closely studied against the Egyptian and Syrian scenes.

Although the literary quality of the travel descriptions is not of a lasting merit, for, with a few exceptions, they lack the individual character and personal touch, and the style is mostly rigid and not very inviting, they have given considerable material for the English literature of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. They were used by many poets, novelists and playwrights mainly for local colours and decorative purposes, especially after the Oriental theme in literature had become a great vogue due to the appearance of the *Arabian Nights* and Beckford's *Vathek*.

Finally, the picture of the Near East drawn by the English travellers of the 18th century, may seem, from one respect hazy and lacking human warmth, and, from another distorted and disorderly, like an attic in which all sorts of things have been confusedly stored. But nevertheless, the picture is not devoid of many interesting aspects, and, besides, it is the picture that attracted the attention of later travellers, who were able to create finer art under better conditions. We cannot expect more from travellers who were deprived of any chance of material contact with the visited countries and their peoples. Even the residents who had spent years in the Near East hardly came out of the limited circle and life of the European communities to which they were confined. Not every traveller could be a Bruce, who, defying all kinds of dangers and precarious circumstances, managed to push himself into the foreground, and successfully stood all trials. Conditions in the 19th century were much different. The military operations in Egypt and Syria at the turn of the century made it a usual thing to see Europeans in great multitudes. A traveller, E. D.

Clarke, describing Rosetta in 1801 writes: "From the different people by whom it was thronged, its streets resembled an immense masquerade. There was hardly a nation in the Mediterranean but might have been then said to have had its representative in Rosetta; and the motley appearance thus caused was further diversified by the addition of English ladies from the fleet and from the army, who, in long white dresses, were riding about upon the asses of the country." (Clarke, III, p. 373). It is no wonder that travellers of the 19th century could in relatively more security admire the stupendous monuments of the Near East without being stoned and accused by the inhabitants of possessing malicious intentions to rob the country of its mysterious treasures. It became possible to effect personal and direct contact with the native people, which is the first prerequisite for fruitful travel. Thus the time became ripe for a greater type of travellers, who could stand the verdict of later generations, travellers like Kinglake, Burton, Doughty and the famous travellers of the present century.

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